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THE MODE AND SUBJECTS

OF

Christian Baptism.

BY DAVID MACALLAN.

ONE SHILLING.

110. d.

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THE issue of this little work has been delayed in consequence of the illness and death of its lamented author—the late Mr. MACALLAN. Correcting the proof sheets of the Appendix formed his last literary labour. As the title page will show, the publication was not intended to bear his name, but there being no other ground for withholding it than a personal shrinking from publicity, it has now been put upon the cover.

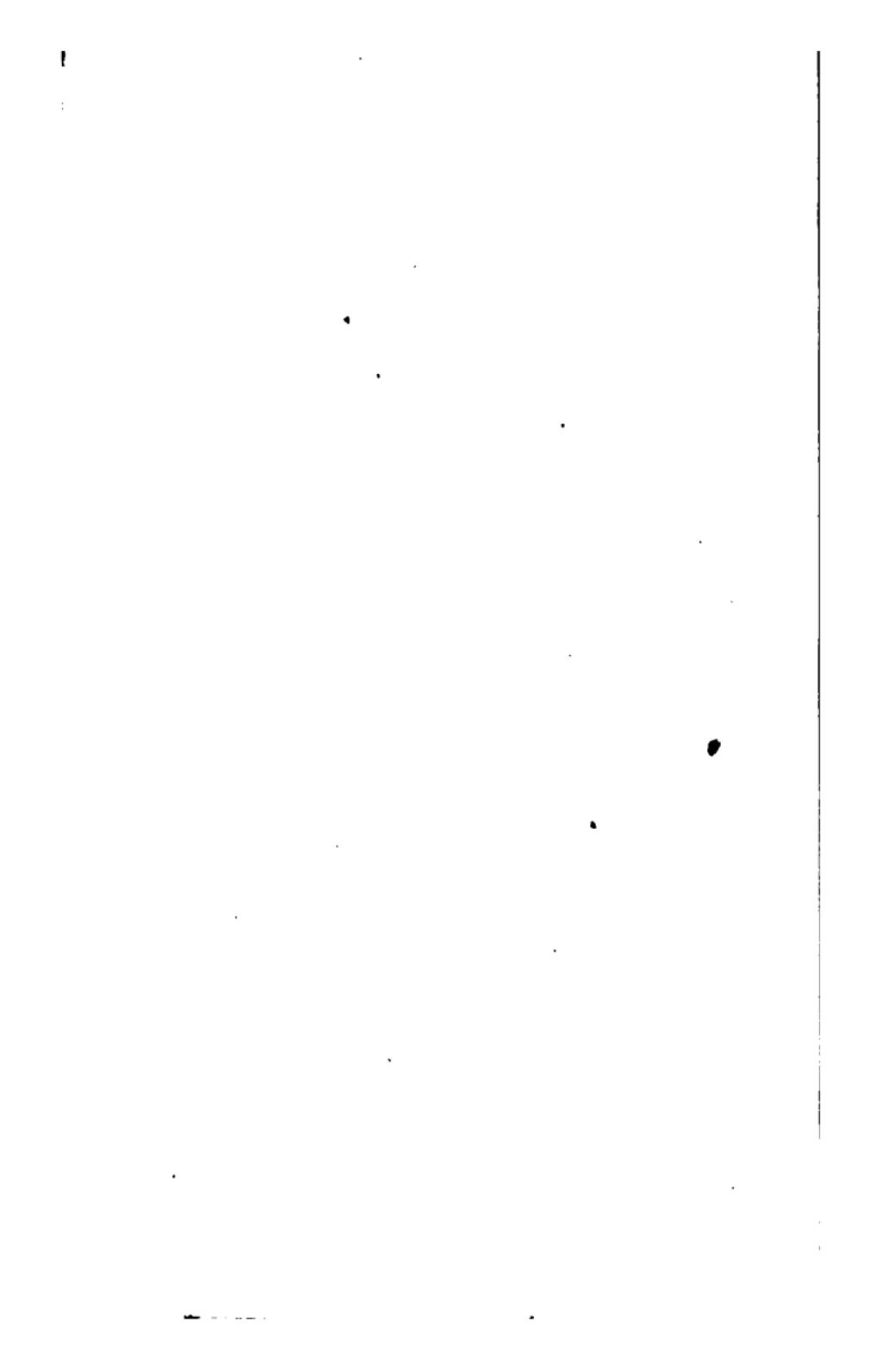




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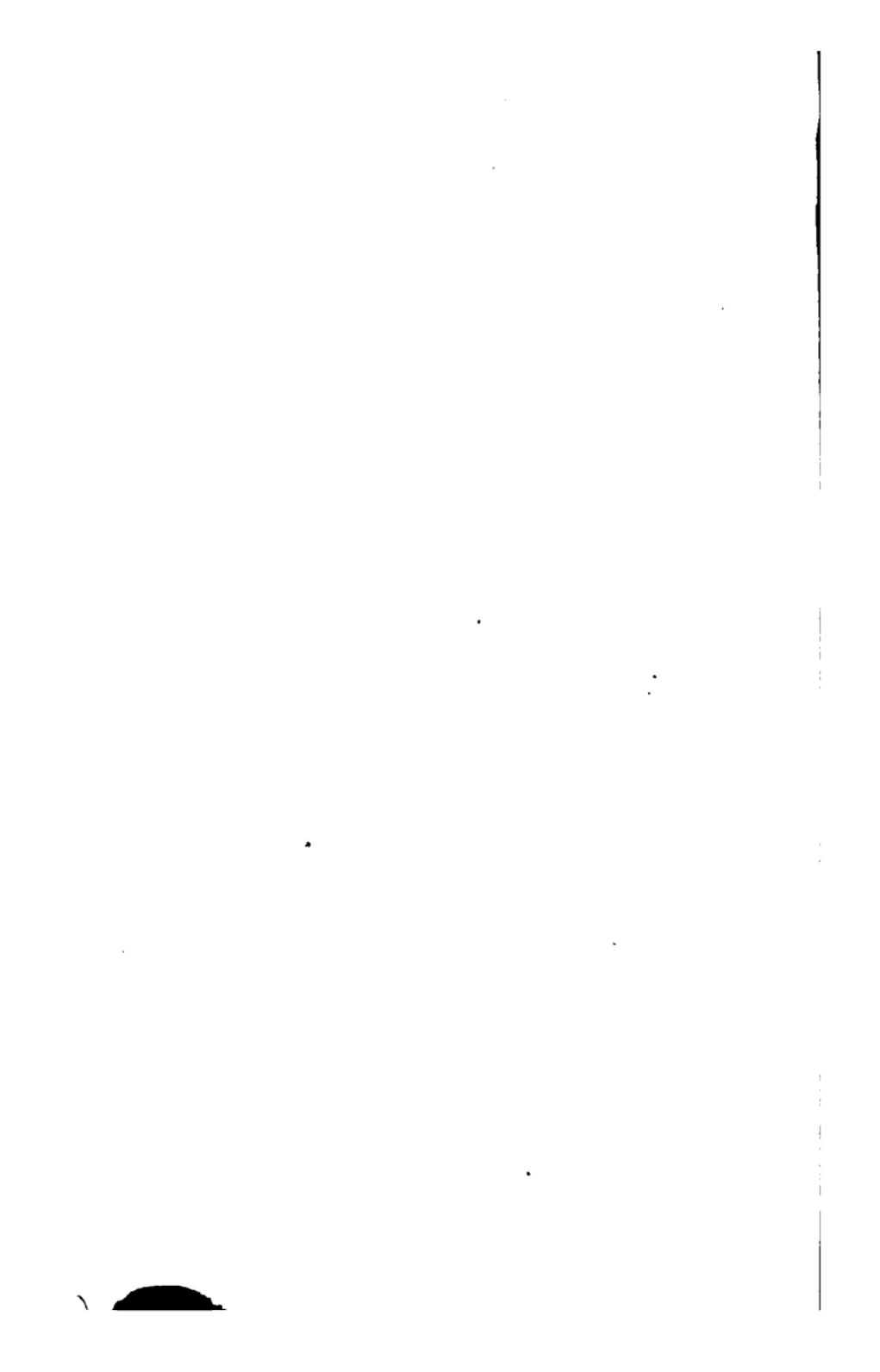




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THE MODE AND SUBJECTS  
OF  
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM,  
COMPREHENDING  
A SPECIAL REPLY  
TO THE LATE  
REV. DR. WARDLAW'S DISSERTATION.

By SCRUTATOR.  
David Macallan  
SECOND EDITION.

WITH AN APPENDIX,  
IN REPLY TO  
ARCHBISHOP WHATELY AND LORD LYTTELTON.

"The word *baptizo* signifies to immerse, and the rite of *immersion* was observed by the ancient Church."—CALVIN.

"It cannot be proved by the Sacred Scriptures that Infant-Baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the Apostles."—LUTHER.

"There appears not the least footprint of the baptism of infants for the first two centuries of the Christian era."—CURELLÆUS.

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## MODE AND SUBJECTS

OF

## CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

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### PART I.—MODE.

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#### INTRODUCTION.

As every part of the revealed will of God deserves the most serious and devout attention of every one to whom he vouchsafes the revelation of that will, the subject of Baptism, as a Divine Ordinance, cannot be viewed with indifference by any one who reveres the Divine authority. “How grand and awful (says Mr. Archibald Hall, the predecessor of the late Dr. Waugh)—how grand and awful is that weighty preface to the institution of Christian Baptism ! Who is that daring, insolent worm that will presume to dispute the authority, or change the ordinance of Him who is given to be head over all things to the Church ? The solemnity of this ordinance is complete ; and all the purposes of its institution are secured by the authority and blessing of Jesus Christ. His laws are not subject to any of those imperfections which are attendants of the best contrived systems of men, and frequently need explanation, amendments, and corrections. It is most dangerous, most presumptuous, to add any ceremony, join any service, on any pretence, unto Heaven’s appointment.” If the eating of the forbidden fruit,

opposition to the Divine prohibition, “brought death into the world, and all our woe”—if the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath day (Numb. xv. 32) incurred the awful punishment of death by stoning—if Nadab and Abihu (Numb. iii. 4) “died before the Lord,” for presenting strange fire in their censers, “which God commanded them not;” surely it becomes us, with the deepest reverence to inquire what is the will of God regarding the ordinances of His kingdom, and to attend to them precisely in the manner, so far as we can discover it, in which he has prescribed them, however apparently indifferent the circumstances may be. Mr. Wesley, on the subject of Christian Baptism, says, “Let our Lord’s submitting to baptism teach us a *holy exactness* in the observance of those institutions *which owe their obligation merely to the Divine command.* Surely thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” “Why call ye me Lord, Lord (says Christ), and do not the things that I say?” It is in this solemn aspect, that the subject of baptism is treated in the following pages, and not as a subject of mere speculative controversy. It was this solemn aspect of it that impressed many of ourselves when we first began to inquire whether that which we received as baptism in our infancy *was really baptism;* and secondly, whether *its being performed on us while infants* was authorised by Him who appointed the rite, and superseded our own obedience to the command to be baptised. In both inquiries, the conclusion to which we came was in the negative, and the following may be considered as comprehending the general reasons on which our conclusions were formed.

## REASONS FOR OUR DECISION IN FAVOUR OF IMMERSION.

I. The proper and primary meaning of the word baptise is,

“ TO DIP, PLUNGE, IMMERSE, OVERWHELM.”

On this point, any one may satisfy himself by looking into any Greek Dictionary;\* but here it is only necessary to adduce a few testimonies from men of learning and character; and, to obviate all reasonable objection, they shall be all from Pedobaptists.

*Alstedius.*—“ To baptise signifies only to *immerse*—not to wash, except by consequence.”

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\* The following are the meanings given by Mr. Ewing, one of the most zealous advocates for sprinkling, and one who, we may rest assured, would have given sprinkling as a meaning if he could have done it honourably:—“(1) I plunge or sink completely under water; (2) I cover partially with water. In this sense, chiefly used in the passive voice, as, ‘their march was in the water the whole day, being covered with water [baptised] *as far up as the belly.*’ [Obs. They were baptised *only as far as they were covered.*] (3) I overwhelm or cover with water, as, ‘to arrive at certain desert places, which, when it is ebb tide, are not overflowed [baptised]; but, when it is full tide, are covered by the waves’—‘of the land animals a great part, overtaken by the river, are destroyed by being overwhelmed’ [baptised]—‘the river, rushing down with a stronger current, overwhelmed [baptised] many with water and destroyed them when swimming with their arms.’ (4) I drench or impregnate with liquor by affusion—the *primary* idea of covering with a fluid being still immediately in view—as, ‘to have been drenched [baptised] with wine.’ (5) I oppress or overwhelm in a metaphorical sense, as, ‘the mind is overwhelmed [baptised] by labours that exceed its power’—‘overwhelmed [baptised] with calamity’—‘iniquity overwhelms [baptises] me,’ &c. (6) I wash in general, without specifying the mode; that is, I cover with water the part of the body that is to be washed, as, ‘Naaman went and washed [baptised] himself in Jordan.’ (7) I wash for the special purpose of symbolical, ritual, or ceremonial purification. (8) I administer the ordinance of Christian baptism.” These are all Mr. Ewing’s meanings, both primary and secondary; and, although he labours under some of them to bring in the idea of pouring, and in our opinion signally fails, we have only to do at present with the proper and primary meaning of the word. Its metaphorical uses will be noticed under next head.

*Witsius*.—"It cannot be denied that the native signification of the word baptise is *to plunge, to dip*."

*Bossuet*.—"To baptise signifies *to plunge*, as is granted by all the world."

*Dr. Campbell*.—"The word *baptise*, both in sacred writers, and in classical, signifies *to dip, to plunge, to immerse*."

*Vitringa*.—"The act of baptising is the *immersion* of believers in water. This expresses the force of the word."

*H. Altingius*.—"The word *baptism* *properly* signifies *immersion*; *improperly*, by a metonymy of the end, *washing*."

*Scapula*.—"To baptise, *to dip, or immerse*, as we immerse any thing for the purpose of dyeing, or cleansing in water."

*Ihenius*.—"The Greek word denotes the *immersion* of a person, or a thing."

*Salmasius*.—"Baptism is *immersion*, and was administered by the ancients according to the force and meaning of the word."

*Mr. Leigh*.—"The native and proper signification of baptism is to dip into water, or to plunge under water."

*Zanchius*.—"The proper signification of baptise is to *immerse, plunge under, to overwhelm in water*.

*Edinburgh Reviewers*.—"That the word signifies *to dip* is a *fixed point universally admitted*."

*Dr. Chalmers*.—"The original meaning of the word *baptism* is *immersion*."

"Not long before the death of Professor Porson (says Dr. Newman), I went in company with a much-respected friend to see that celebrated Greek scholar at the London Institution. I was curious to hear in what manner he read Greek. He very condescendingly, at my request, took down a Greek Testament, and read, perhaps, twenty verses in one of the gospels, in which the word *Baptizo* occurred. I said, 'Sir, you know there is a controversy among Christians respecting the meaning of that word.' I inquired whether, in his opinion, *Baptizo* must be considered equal to *Bapto*, which he said was *to tinge*, as in dyeing. He replied to this effect—That, 'if there be a difference, he should take the former to be *the stronger*; and that it signified a *total immersion*.' This conversation took place 27th August, 1807."

Alexander de Stoundza, a writer in the Greek Church, in a work published at Stuttgart in 1816, says, "The Western Church has departed from the institution of Jesus Christ, and has dispelled from view all the sublimity of the external sign of baptism. In short, it has done violence both to the word and to the idea, in practising sprinkling as baptism, the very enunciation of which is a ludicrous contradiction. In truth, the word *baptizo* has but *one signification*. It signifies literally and perpetually **TO PLUNGE**. Baptism and immersion are identically the same;

and to say *baptism by sprinkling* is the same as to say *immersion by sprinkling*, or any other contradiction in terms."

In addition to these quotations which we have given from eminent scholars to show the proper meaning of the word baptise, it may be useful to add a few sentences from different Greek writers, to show how the word is used in its connexion. They are taken from Carson's Work on Baptism, where they are fully illustrated :—

" When a piece of iron is taken red-hot out of the fire, and immersed [*baptised*, in the original] in water, the heat is repelled and extinguished."—*Herac. Pon.*

" The pilot cannot tell but he may save one in the voyage that had better be sunk [*baptised*] in the sea."—*Themistius.*

" Thou mayest be immersed [*baptised*] O bladder ! but thou art not fated to sink."—*Plut.*

" When the ship was on the point of sinking [being baptised]."—*Josephus.*

" Our ship having been sunk [*baptised*] in the midst of the Adriatic Sea."—*Ib.*

" The boy was sent to Jericho by night, and there, by command, having been immersed [*baptised*] in a pond, he perished."—*Ib.*

" The same transaction is related in the Antiquities, in these words, 'Pressing him down always, as he was swimming, and *baptising* him, as in sport, they did not give over till they entirely drowned him.' "—*Ib.*

" He breathed as persons after *being baptised*."—*Hipp.*

" They are of themselves *baptised*, and sunk in the marshes."—*Polyb.*

" How could it escape sinking [being baptised] from the multitude of rowers?"—*Dio.*

" When the accused person enters the lake (Styx), if he is innocent, he passes boldly through, having the water up to the knees ; but if guilty, having advanced a little, he is *plunged* [*baptised*] up to the head."—*Porph.*

" There is a rivulet in the south of Cappadocia, whose waters are so buoyant that, if an arrow is thrown in, it will hardly sink [*be baptised*] in them."—*Strabo.*

The same writer, "in another place, ascribing the fabulous properties of the asphaltites to the lake Sisbon, says, 'The men floats a-top, because of the nature of the water, which admits no diving ; for, if a man goes into it, he cannot *be baptised*], but is forcibly kept above.' "

From the foregoing, it will be obvious how hopeless would be the task of attempting to prove that the proper meaning of the word *baptise* is even *washing*, not to speak of sprinkling, both which ideas have appropriate Greek words to express them. That it conveys the sense of purification, as a consequence of immersion, is not disputed, just as our word *dipping* conveys the sense of dyeing, when used in connexion with dyeing; but as, in the one case, the word *dip* does not properly mean to *dye*; so, in the other, the word *baptise* does not properly mean to *wash*. The idea of washing does not once enter into any of the foregoing examples.

II.—All the metaphorical uses\* of the word are accordant with this primary meaning, as is the case with most metaphorical words in all languages. Thus, in our own language, the words *steep*, *plunge*, *bathe*, *swim*, have all definite significations, which every Englishman understands when he hears

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\* Mr. Ewing finds the idea of pouring involved in such passages as the following:—

(1) “The river, rushing down with a stronger current *overwhelmed* [baptised] many with water (covered them, says Mr. E., by rushing or *pouring* upon them), and destroyed them when swimming with their arms.” [Any one will perceive that the current of a river overwhelming soldiers, and *drowning* them, bears no resemblance to *sprinkling water on the face with the hand*; but it entirely accords with the proper meaning of the word *baptise*.]

(2) “I myself also am one of those who were yesterday *drenched* [baptised] with wine”—“*drenched* to insensibility and sleep by intemperance;” [or it may be rendered, “*steeped* in wine, *sunk* to insensibility by intemperance.”] Here the figure entirely accords with the proper meaning of *baptise*. But how Mr. Ewing’s idea “of *affusion*,” or “pouring abundantly upon, so as to wet thoroughly,” is conveyed by a person wallowing in drunkenness, we cannot conjecture, far less how it can be associated with the practice of *sprinkling*.]

(3) “As plants are nourished by moderate, but choked by excessive, watering (or much water), in like manner the mind is enlarged by labours suited to its strength, but is *overwhelmed* [baptised] by such as exceed its power.” [The transfer of the idea of

them pronounced. Yet, what is more common than to hear of a person, when he has been drinking to excess, being *steeped* in wine?—of a person who applies an undue measure of attention to the affairs of the nation being *steeped* in politics? But who would argue from this that one of the meanings of the word *steep* is to drink immoderately? and another to pursue any object to excess? In the same manner we speak of one person being *plunged* in debt—*plunged* into difficulties—of another being *bathed* in tears—*bathed* in sorrow; yet who would speak of the word *plunge* meaning *to run in debt*; or of the word *bathe* meaning *to trickle*? The Psalmist says (Psalm vi. 6), “All the night I make my bed *to swim*; I water my couch with tears;” but no one would be so foolish as to say that to *shed tears* on anything conveys the meaning of *swim*. In all these cases, the analogy between the primary and figurative uses of the words is sufficiently apparent to add force and beauty to the expressions, which would otherwise be absurd; and no less obvious is the analogy between the figurative and primary uses of the

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rain in the first member of this sentence to the action of excessive mental labour in the last, is as egregious a blunder in criticism as could well be conceived. The two clauses, instead of being placed in *accordance*, are placed in *contrast*; and the meaning is obviously this:—“As plants are nourished by *showers*, but drowned by *floods*, so the mind is enlarged by moderate exercise, but *sinks* under excessive labour.”]

So also, “*baptised* the common people with *taxes*,” which Mr. E. renders *overloaded*, may equally well be rendered *flooded*; but *sprinkled* would convey an opposite idea.

Again, “I am one of those who have been *overwhelmed* [*baptised*] by that wave of calamity.” “Iniquity *overwhelms* [*baptises*] me,” &c. The idea here is precisely the same. The individual is represented as being *beneath the wave of calamity*—his iniquity has “*gone over his head*,” as the Psalmist expresses the same idea. So “*baptised*, by a debt of five thousand myriads,” may be well rendered “*sunk in a debt*,” &c.

In short, the idea of being immersed or overwhelmed accords exactly with all these figurative expressions. The idea of *spirit* does not accord with one of them. *Yet these are the best that Ewing has been able to produce.*

word *baptise*—a word that has been so twisted to favour the idea of sprinkling, that, if words in general were treated in a similar manner, there would be no certainty in language. For instance, Acts i. 5, “Ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence,” evidently refers to the copiousness of his influences. But we are directed to passages in which the fulfilment of this promise is given in such terms as the following:—“The Holy Ghost was *poured out—shed forth—fell*,” &c.; and it is, therefore, argued that the Scriptural meaning of the word *baptise* is *to pour*. But the same argument would prove that the word means also *to fill*, for this expression is used more frequently than the other in reference to the fulfilment of the promise—thus, Acts ii. 4, “And they were all *filled* with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Chap. iv. 31, “And as they prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all *filled* with the Holy Ghost,” &c. &c. All this is in accordance with the passage in John vii. 37, “If any man *thirst*, let him come unto me *and drink*. He that believeth on *me*, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. *This spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive, for the HOLY GHOST WAS NOT YET GIVEN, BECAUSE THAT JESUS WAS NOT YET GLORIFIED.*” Suppose now that it should be argued that *drinking* was the mode of baptism, it would be supported by many more passages than they have who adopt sprinkling, and it would be also supported by a far better analogy. In Luke i. 15, we are told of John the Baptist, that he should “drink neither wine nor strong drink, but that he should be *filled with the Holy Ghost*, even from the womb.” What more conclusive proof could be desired (might the advocate for drinking say) than this, that *drinking* is the proper mode of baptism, and that it to be administered to infants? Surely (he

might say), if *an infant* could be capable of the thing signified, *infants* are capable of the sign. And what is the sign? Why, *drinking*. John was not “to *drink* wine nor strong drink,” but he was to be *filled* with the Spirit, and the influences of the Spirit are represented by water; therefore, nothing can be plainer than that *infants should be baptised by drinking water*. But there is no end to the extravagances to which this mode of argument would lead; and all would be equally ready to detect its fallaciousness, were it applied to any subject in the support of which they did not feel interested.

III.—But although the proper meaning of the word *baptise* is to *immerse*, and although all the metaphorical uses of the word accord with it, might not the word after all have been used in Scripture in a different sense?

In opposition to such decisive authorities as we have given for the meaning of the word *baptise*, the special pleading of such as Dr. M'Leod of New York is sometimes brought forward; and it is represented that, if there be authority on one side, there is also authority on the other. This is an egregious mis-statement of the case. These gentlemen do not pretend that the proper meaning of the word *baptise*, in ordinary use, is not to *immerse* or *overwhelm*. Their argument is, that this cannot be proved from the connexion to be the meaning of the word in *its religious use*; or that, in some instances in the Scriptures, circumstances require another meaning. Dr. Beecher, for instance, says, “Though I do not regard it as an integral part of the argument which I propose to construct, yet, for the sake of completeness, I think it but right to state *what seems to be the truth* on this point. (1.) I freely admit that, in numerous cases, the word *baptise* *clearly denotes to immerse*—in which case an agent submerges partially or totally some person or thing. Indeed, this is *so notoriously true*, that I need attempt no proof. (2.) It is also applied in cases where a fluid is pou-

adduced by Dr Wardlaw (and we shall forthwith proceed to quote them) admit of easy explanation in accordance with the ordinary use and primary signification of the word baptise ; and, therefore, to impose a meaning on it in the New Testament, which it had not among the writers of the age in which it was written, is alike contrary to reason and the analogy of revelation, especially as the Greek language has words to express with precision any of the senses contended for. If, for instance, the Saviour, when he instituted the ordinance, had intended simply **WASHING**, without special reference to mode, **LOUO** would have expressed that meaning, as, Isa. i. 16, “ *Wash ye* [lousasthe], make you clean.” If he intended simply *purification*, another word [kathairo], akin to one in the same verse, would have expressed his meaning. “ *Wash ye, make you clear*” [katharoi genesthe] ; or **AGNIZO**, Acts xxi. 24,

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*scatter in drops.*” Now, we will undertake to produce *ten passages* in which this word occurs, in different writings, for *every one* in which the word baptise occurs in the New Testament ; and will defy any one to prove from these passages *alone*, without reference to the settled meaning of the word, that it means anything like sprinkling ; and we might do the same with any word that might, be named. Take the following instances of this word :—Heb. ix. 21. “ *Moreover, he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.*” Suppose we were to insist that the word sprinkled here means to *smear* or *stain*, would it be possible for Dr. W. to prove, from the passage and its connexion *alone*, that it does not?—Isa. lii. 15, “ *So shall he sprinkle many nations.*” Who could prove from this passage and its connexion *alone*, that the word *sprinkle* does not mean to *punish*, or *destroy*, or the *reverse*—1 Pet. i. 2, “ *And sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.*” What would be more plausible, if we were to disregard the established sense of the word, than that it here means *shedding*? Taking the connexion *alone* of these passages, and thousands of others that might be quoted, it would be vastly more difficult to prove that the word *sprinkle* in them means anything resembling its proper sense, than it is to prove that the word *baptise* in the New Testament means *immerse*, because there are circumstances connected with the use of the word in the latter case, that do not exist in the former. But we maintain that, when the signification of a word is settled by usage, the *word itself* indicates the meaning of the writer, and is *universally admitted* as evidence of his meaning, irrespective of corroborating circumstances, else language would,

“Take and *purify* thyself [agnisthete\*].” If he intended *pouring*, CHEO or ENCHEO\* would have expressed that meaning, as Ezek. xxiv. 3, “Set on the pot, and *pour* [encheon] water into it;” or, had he intended *sprinkling*, RAINO\* or RANTIZO would have expressed that meaning, as Ezek. xxxvi. 25, “Then will I *sprinkle* [rano] clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.” But he did not employ any of these words; he employed BAPTIZO, which signifies *immerse*; and the question is, Did he *intend* immersion? If he did *not*, how are we to account for his using a word of which even Mr.

in most cases, be a jumble of useless sounds. Hence we maintain that, since the settled meaning of baptise is to *immerse* or *overwhelm*, the employment of that word *alone* is all that is necessary to indicate *immersion*, so long as usage continues to support that sense. But no change of usage that might have occurred subsequently to the apostolic age could have had any effect upon its meaning in the New Testament; that was settled by previous usage. Dr. W. most unaccountably remarks, that “the attempt made to determine the sense of baptism in favour of immersion, by usage, from the New Testament, has appeared to him to be a complete failure.” If any one ever made such an attempt, it was a very foolish one. That baptism signifies immersion, was “*determined*” before the existence of the New Testament, and the only question is, whether it has the same sense in the New Testament that it has everywhere else. To argue, without the shadow of authority, that it has not, involves a principle that is pregnant with the most dangerous consequences, as we have already hinted.

Dr. Wardlaw’s remarks on the prepositions “in, into, and out of,” avail him nothing whatever, unless he were prepared to take his stand on the position that, in coming to the Scriptures, we may, to suit ourselves, *impose* fanciful meanings on the words used, instead of coming to *learn the will of God from those words*, which must always be understood to have been used by him in their *ordinary meanings*, unless a deviation be demanded by the connexion, or specifically indicated.

\* The following verses will show the precision with which these words are used in the Scriptures:—

Lev. xiv. 15, 16—“And the priest shall take some of the log of oil and *pour* [epicheei] into the palm of his own left hand, and the priest shall *dip* [bepsei] his finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall *sprinkle* [ranei] of the oil with his finger seven times before the Lord.”

Num. xix. 19—“And on the seventh day he shall purify [aphag-nisthesetai] himself and *wash* [plunei] his clothes, and bathe [lo-setai] himself in water, and be clean at even.”

Ewing gives us, as the first and radical meaning, “*I plunge or sink completely under water?*”\* But if he *did intend* immersion, and intended, *by immersion*, to represent not merely purification, but also fellowship in his sufferings, death and resurrection (Rom. vi. 3—6), what Christian, who is convinced that this is the case, will decline compliance with that intention? If it be said *a drop of water is as good as the ocean for ceremonial purification*, we grant it, *if God appoint it for that purpose*; but if God commands *an immersion*, it is not for us to say *a drop will do*, any more than if he

\* Since writing the above, we find that Dr. Cox had put the question, “What reason can be assigned, if pouring be the proper method of administering baptism, for the constant use of a term [to designate the ordinance] in the New Testament, which every critic admits signifies *immersion*?” To this Dr. W. replies, “It is true that such terms [as signify pouring or sprinkling] do not happen to be used with immediate application to the *ordinance* of baptism, because *baptizo* is the appropriate term, the *vox signata*, for that ordinance. But the term *pour* is uniformly applied to the baptism of the Spirit.” This, instead of being an answer to Dr Cox, makes his question still more emphatic. The question was, “Why is a word used to designate the ordinance which all critics admit signifies *immersion*, if *pouring* was intended?” The reply is, “Because *baptizo* is the appropriate term, the *vox signata*, for that ordinance!” This is no answer. It is merely a statement of the fact in stronger terms; and the question returns, “Why was *this word*, so *inappropriate*, if *pouring* was intended, chosen as the *appropriate* term—the *vox signata* for the ordinance?” Why not a word that *signified pouring*? To this no answer has ever been given. The figurative application of the term *baptise* to the influence of the Spirit is quite irrelevant, and is not fitted even to parry the question. As well might Jer. xlix. 12, and many similar passages, be brought to prove that punishment is “*equivalent*,” as Dr. W. expresses himself, to the word *drink*. “Behold they whose judgment was not to *drink* of the cup have assuredly *drunken*; and art thou he that shall go altogether *unpunished*? Thou shalt not go *unpunished*, but thou shall surely *drink* of it.” Here the words *drink* and *punished* are *interchangeable*, but who will say they are *synonymous*? Yet this is precisely the argument drawn from the figurative use of the word *baptise*. See p. 14. Only grant to Socinians Dr. Wardlaw’s principles of interpretation in reference to baptism, and the Scriptures, so admirably illustrated in his *Works* on the *Socinian Controversy*, would have no more force than the ambiguous utterances of heathen oracles.

were to command *sprinkling*, it would be lawful for us to have recourse, as an improvement, to *immersion*. On the same principle it might be urged, that to look at a crucifix would be as good a memorial of Christ's death as to eat the bread and drink the wine of the communion, according to his command; but few, we presume, would feel at liberty to substitute the one for the other.

On all such reasoning as the above we remark, (1.) That there is not a single hint in the Scriptures, that the word *baptise* is used in any other than its proper and universally understood sense. (2.) That, on the principle involved in this mode of interpretation, the Bible would be no revelation to us, nor would it be possible for us to know the will of God; for, however plain the words employed might be, we should still be at a loss to know what meaning was intended to be attached to them. (3.) That a more unreasonable canon of criticism was never adopted, than that which some men employ with respect to the meaning of the word *baptise*, viz. that if there are not *circumstances* connected with the use of any word that *fix its meaning*, we are at liberty to attach a plausible meaning to it, though *it cannot be proved to have that meaning any where else*. Thus, it is argued, that because a great number of passages are found in which the word *baptise* occurs, without any circumstances to fix on it the sense of *immerse*, therefore it admits of any other plausible meaning, such as *sprinkle*, or *pour*. On this principle, we might ask, what word is there that might not be made to mean any thing we please? A thousand instances could be produced of the uses of the most common words of any language, in which there is no evidence of the meaning, but in the *words themselves*. Thus, for instance, in the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper (Matth. xxv: 26), we are told that, "as they were eating, Jes-

took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, and said, Drink ye all of it." Here no one can doubt that to *eat* and *drink*, in the ordinary acceptation of these terms, in remembrance of Christ, is the duty enjoined ; but it is only from the *words themselves* that we can ascertain it. There are no *circumstances* that fix the common meaning on the words *eat* and *drink* ; and it is well known that these words are often used to designate acts of the mind, as Jer. xv. 16, " Thy words were found of me, and I did *eat* them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Isa. lv. 2, " Hearken diligently unto me, and *eat* ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness," &c. 1 Cor. x. 3, 4, " They did all *eat* the same spiritual meat, and did all *drink* the same spiritual drink ; for they *drank* of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that *rock was Christ.*" John vii. 37, " If any man thirst, let him come unto me and *drink*," &c. &c. Now, might it not be argued, with as much plausibility here as in the case of *baptise*, that as there are no *circumstances* that necessarily fix the ordinary meaning of eating and drinking on the words employed in the institution of the Lord's Supper, all that was meant was, that the disciples were to take the bread into their hands, and *meditate* upon it, as representative of the broken body of Christ ; and gaze upon the wine, and *contemplate* the truths which it is fitted to bring to remembrance ? Might it not, in confirmation of this view of the words, be urged, that the simple acts of eating bread and drinking wine could not be a matter of any importance ; and, as the great end intended was the commemoration of Christ's sufferings and death, this could be accomplished quite as well by looking at the bread and the wine, as by eating and drinking ? The principle for which we contend is, that

words are always to be understood in the sense which usage has established, unless the circumstances in which they occur demand another sense. Mere difficulties, or simple improbabilities, that admit of explanation, can never warrant our tampering with the established and universally understood import of language, else language would be in a great measure useless, and in many cases worse than useless ;—when a man asked fish from another, he might give him a serpent ; when he asked for bread, he might give him a stone.

The following appear to be all the passages in the New Testament, besides those already noticed, which are fitted to throw light on the meaning of the word *baptise* ; and let any one judge whether they *require*\* to be understood in a different sense from the common one. Let the word *sprinkle* be tried with them, and they will sound awkwardly enough.

Matt. iii. 5.—“Then went out unto him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptised by him *in Jordan*, confessing their sins. (Ver. 13.) Then cometh Jesus from Galilee *to Jordan*, unto John, *to be baptised* by him. (Ver. 16.) And Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straightway *out of the water*.”

Mark i. 4.—“John did baptise in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptised by him *in the river of Jordan*, confessing their sins. (Ver. 9.) And it came to pass, in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptised by John

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\* It ought to be particularly noticed, in examining these passages, that, as *immerse* is the acknowledged primary and proper meaning of the word *baptizo*, no other meaning can be legitimately attached to it, unless in any case it can be shown that it will not bear its native meaning without *doing violence* to the sense of the connexion. On the other hand, as there are appropriate Greek words for expressing the ideas of *sprinkling* and *pouring*, these ideas cannot be attached to the word *baptizo*, unless it can be shown that the circumstances are such that they *must* be so to *preserve* the sense of the connexion. But it will easily be seen that the reverse of this is the case.

*in Jordan, and, straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened," &c.*

Mark vii. 4.—“ And when they come from the market, except they wash they eat not. And many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washing [*baptising*] of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables or beds.”\*

Take this in connexion with Lev. xi. 32, “ And upon whatsoever any of them (the dead bodies of unclean animals) doth fall, it shall be unclean, whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack ; whatever vessel it be wherein work is done, *it must be put into water*, and it shall be unclean until the even.” Chap. vi. 28, If it (the sin-offering) be sodden in a *brazen pot*, it shall be *both scoured and rinsed in water*.” As to the beds, Calmut says, “ Nothing sounds more uncouth to English ears than to hear of a person carrying his bed about with him ; but, when explained, the apparent incongruity vanishes. ‘ Arise, take up thy bed,’ means take up thy mattress, the covering spread under thee.” Now, we know that every bed whereon an unclean person lay was unclean, and whosoever touched it had to wash his clothes. (Lev. xv. 4.) Surely, then, there is nothing surprising in the Pharisees washing the *unclean mattress itself*, when the clothes of him who *touched* it required to be washed. But whatever were the kind of beds or couches here alluded to, and whatever was the traditional purification to which the reference was made, till it be proved that they were not *immersed*, there is not a shadow of force in the bare supposition that they *might have been sprinkled*.

What we have said is sufficient to remove an objection—the burden of proof lies upon those who differ from us, in assigning a meaning to the word which is not supported by the usage of the language. If immersion was *possible*, it is enough for us ; those who differ from us are bound *to prove* that the mode

\* It is the same word that is used here which occurs in Mat. ix. 6. “ *Arise, take up thy bed, and go to thine house.*”

of purification was what they represent. As to the baptising after coming from market, Tertullian informs us, that even the Christians in his day, after coming from market, always went into the bath; and we know that the Pharisees were not behind them in superstitious observances. But the simple statement of the sacred historian that they *baptised* on coming from market is enough for us, till it be *proved* that they *did not* on such occasions immerse themselves.

Luke iii. 7.—“Then said he to the multitude, who *came forth* to be baptised.” [Query—Why *come forth* to be baptised?]

John i. 28.—“These things were done in Bethabara, *where* John was baptising.” [Why any *special place* for baptising? The next passage suggests the answer to both questions.]

John iii. 28.—“And John was baptising in Aenon, near to Salim, because there was *much water* [or *many waters*] *there*”

John x. 40.—“And he went away again beyond Jordan *into the place* where John at first baptised.” [Was ever such language used regarding sprinkling?]

Acts viii. 36.—“And as they (Philip and the Eunuch) went on they came to *a certain water*; and the Eunuch said, See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptised? And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and *they went down both into the water*, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptised him. And when they were come up *out of the water*, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip,” &c.

1 Cor. x. 1, 2.—“And were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.”

Dr. Dwight adduces the following passage from the 77th Psalm, as a proof that *pouring* is the meaning of the word baptise in this passage:—“The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. The clouds *oured* out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightning lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path is in the great waters; and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.”

Never surely was a more far-fetched explanation of a word given, especially when we are plainly told (Ex. xiv. 21, 22), that “The Lord caused the sea to go back<sup>1</sup> a strong east wind all the night, and made the s-

*land*, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea *upon the dry ground*,\* and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left." There is no evidence that a drop of rain fell during the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea ; on the contrary, "*the strong east*" wind seems to have been sent for the purpose of drying the ground to afford them a convenient passage. The following is the opinion of other Pedobaptists :—

*Whitby*.—"They were covered with the sea on both sides, so that both the cloud and the sea had some resemblance to our being covered with water in baptism. Their go-

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\* It is remarkable how men's judgments are warped by the position they occupy in argument. If we are surprised at Dr. Dwight on the one hand, we are no less surprised at Dr. Wardlaw on the other. The absurd notion of the former is not noticed by the latter, but he takes his stand on the *very opposite ground*, viz. the ground, that the Israelites did not come into contact with water in any way ! After characterising "*as a conceit*," what other eminent Pedobaptists have noticed in the form of concession, he exclaims, in reference to the *figure* here employed, "*A dry baptism ! without the contact at all of the baptismal element in any way !*" Would our brethren consider a man duly baptised, by being placed between two cisterns of water, with a third over his head ?" This is beneath Dr. Wardlaw's usual perspicacity—we will not say unworthy of his candour, for the most clear-headed men are often blinded by their prejudices. Dr. W. knows, as well as we do, that the whole language of this passage is highly figurative. The very next words to those now before us, are, "*And did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink ; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.*" Now, were we disposed to be as jocular as the Doctor, might we not exclaim, "*A dry drinking this ! A very unsubstantial eating !*" Would he consider himself fed by faith, if he were suffering from hunger ? Would his thirst be quenched by contemplation, if famishing for drink ?" But the most surprising thing in the whole is, that the Doctor immediately proceeds to adduce *figurative language* to prove that the idea of baptism is consistent with pouring ! "*I will pour out my Spirit*," &c. is the phraseology which, in connexion with the expression, "*baptism of the Spirit*," he produces as proof that the word *baptise* means to *pour*. Now, might we not adopt the Doctor's own very words in reference to this, and exclaim, "*A dry pouring this, without the contact at all of the baptismal element in any way !*" Would our brethren consider a child

ing into the sea resembled the ancient rite of *going into the water*, and their coming out of it, their *rising out of the water*."

*Witsius*.—"It is to be considered that the apostle here uses the term baptism in a figurative sense, yet there is some agreement to the external sign. The sea is water, and a cloud differs but little from water. The cloud hung over their heads, and the sea surrounded them on each side, and so the water in regard to those who are baptised."

Col. ii. 12.—"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him," &c. Rom. vi. 4.—"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

"It seems the part of candour (says Dr. Doddridge) to confess that there is here an allusion to the manner of baptism by immersion."

duly baptised without water?" This, observe, is not our argument—as an argument we consider it not worth a straw, and merely advert to it to show its futility. We freely admit that there must be some analogy between the figure "*baptism* of the Spirit," and the thing signified; but that analogy we at once perceive in the *abundance* of the influence; and hence, in one of the very passages quoted by Dr. W., these words occur, "the renewing of the Holy Ghost which he shed on us abundantly"—hence also says the prophet, "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and *floods* upon the dry ground." Dr. W. remarks, "when Peter himself tells me that he did consider *effusion* as baptism, it is not the learning of all the etymologists in Europe that will persuade me, against his own words, that it was impossible he should." This to say the least of it, is very unlike Dr. Wardlaw. On the same ground he might say, "all the etymologists in Europe could not persuade him" that the prophet Isaiah did not understand the word '*flood*' to mean *descending rain*—that Doddridge, when he spoke of the Saviour being "*bathed* in blood," did not understand the word *bathe* to mean *perspiration*—that the poet, when he says, describing the flood,

"The mountains were *submerged*," and  
"The mopped out nations *sunk*."

did not understand the words *submerge* and *sink* to mean the *rising of water*, so as to cover an object.

We need not multiply examples of the weakness of this argument. We may simply say that Dr. W.'s mistake appears to us to lie in his supposing that Peter referred to the *act of pouring*, instead of the *copiousness* of the influence, when he spoke of the influence of the Spirit as a *baptism*.—We, at least, have the indisputable meaning of the word in our support; Dr. W. has only a figurative expression, the import of which he here plainly misapprehends.

"Jesus Christ, by death (says Dr. Chalmers in his recently published Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans), underwent this sort of baptism, even immersion under the surface of the ground, whence he soon emerged again by his resurrection. We, by being baptised into his death, are conceived to have made a similar translation—in the act of descending under the water of baptism to have resigned an old life, and in the act of ascending, to emerge into a second or new life."

'Buried with him'—“alluding (says Wesley) to the ancient manner of baptising by immersion.”

Dr. Wall, Archbishops Tillotson and Secker, Bishop Nicholson, Drs. Whithby, Baxter, Whitefield, &c., all give the same view of these passages.\*

Heb. ix. 10.—“Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings,” [baptisms, immersions, according to Macknight].

“The law and history of the Jews (says Calmet) abounds with lustrations and baptisms of different sorts. Moses enjoined the people to wash their garments, and to purify themselves by way of preparation for the reception of the law. (Ex. xix. 10.)

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\* The following, on the other hand, are Dr. Wardlaw's remarks on them:—“I confess the resemblance to the burial and resurrection of Christ has always appeared to me but a far-fetched fancy. I shall say nothing stronger, lest I should possibly be in the wrong in so considering it.” We do not wonder at Dr. W.'s misgiving, when it is an apostle who says we are “buried with him in baptism in which also we are risen with him;” or, as in the other passage, “we are buried with him by baptism into death, that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Plainly this “fancy” is “fetched” no farther than from the very words of the apostle. But the Doctor's explanation is one that is not warranted by either of the passages. It is as follows:—“Since, in our being baptised into Jesus Christ, we were baptised into his death—into the *faith* of his death, as the death of a surety; we may be considered as *BY FAITH* partaking with him in his death—as [by faith] *buried with him*,” &c. The Doctor's explanation is, that it is *BY FAITH* that we are *buried with him*, and *raised with him*; but this is not what the apostle says here: his language is, “*by baptism* we are *buried with him*, and *raised with him*.” If he meant only *faith*, the introduction of baptism was superfluous; nay, it was a needless incumbrance; nay, in one of the passages it would have made the apostle speak nonsense: thus, “*by faith* we are *buried with him*—*by faith* we are *raised with him*, *through the faith* of the operation of God!” Besides, although Dr. Wardlaw justly remarks that “the language of the whole passage is figurative,” his substitution of *faith* for *baptism* nullifies the figure here; for, except in *baptism*, there is nothing in this part of the passage out of which to form a figure. But, when the plain meaning is admitted—the meaning that was so

The Priests and Levites, before they exercised their ministry, washed themselves. All legal pollutions were cleansed by baptism, or *plunging* into water. Certain diseases were to be purified by bathing. To touch a dead body, to be present at funerals, &c., required purification. But these purifications were not uniform; generally the people *dipped themselves entirely under water*, and this is the most simple notion of the word *baptise*." Hence, we see, there were "*diners baptisms*" among the Jews. Even in the tabernacle service itself there were several. See Lev. xvi.

There is only one passage more that seems to bear upon the subject; but in its bearing it is very important, as it excludes the idea both of sprinkling and cleansing.

Luke xii. 50.—"I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?"

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obvious to the Pedobaptist writers quoted above, all is simple and natural.

Professor Stuart's criticism on this passage is still more objectionable than that of Dr Wardlaw. He justly remarks that the language is antithetical, but, in quoting it, he most unaccountably omits the words in which the latter part of the antithesis lies, and puts in their room the succeeding clause, thus completely altering the bearing of the passage. This must have been an oversight; but it strikingly illustrates the liability, of even candid writers, to fall into mistakes, when striving to carry a false theory.

The following is Dr Tholuck's ingenuous exposition of both passages: "The apostle in this verse (Rom. vi. 4) represents the Christian undergoing baptism, as being in some sort buried with the Saviour." And then, "it was natural to assimilate, in like manner, the coming out of baptism and the resurrection of Christ, which accordingly he does. We find at another place the same symbolical allusion, Col. ii. 12. For the explanation of this figurative description of the baptismal rite, it is necessary to call the attention to the *well-known* circumstance, that, in the early days of the Church, persons, when they were baptized, were first plunged below, and then raised above, the water, to which practice, according to the direction of the Apostle, the early Christians gave a symbolical import. Thus, Chrysostom on the third chapter of John observes:—"When we sink our heads in the water, as if it were in a tomb, the old man is buried," &c.

So, Gregory Navianzen (A. D. 360). "We are buried with Christ by baptism, that we may also rise with him; we descend with him, that we may also be lifted up with him." And,

Ambrose, (A. D. 374). "Thou wast asked, 'Dost thou believe?' thou saidst 'I do believe,' and wast immersed, that is, thou buried with Christ."

To show the force of the language here used, we may refer to Psal. lxix. 2.—“I am come into deep waters where the *floods* overflow me.” Ver. 15. “Let not the *water-flood* overflow me, neither let the *deep swallow me up*.”—xlvi. 7. “All thy *waves and thy billows* are gone over me.”—lxxxviii. 7. “Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, thou hast afflicted me with *all thy waves*.”

“Here I must acknowledge (says Sir H. Trelawny) our Baptist brethren have the advantage; for our Redeemer’s sufferings must not be compared to a few drops of water sprinkled on the face, for he was *plunged* in distress, and his soul was *environed* with sorrows.”

These, we think, are all the passages in the New Testament that have a direct reference to the mode of baptism, and every one of them is in full accordance with the established use of the word. Instead of the idea of sprinkling being rendered *necessary* by the circumstances (which the Pedobaptist argument requires), the whole of them are inconsistent with it, when taken in connexion with the parallel passages, and, therefore, it is plain that it is altogether unwarrantable to attach any other than its proper meaning, viz. *immerse*, to the word baptise as it occurs in Scripture.

And now we may be permitted to ask—supposing any one to be called upon to give an account of *our mode* of baptism—How would it be possible for him to give it in more definite language than that in which it is described in the passages we have just quoted? How would he describe the action itself? He might describe it by the word *immerse*—this, *in Greek*, is the very word used by the writers of the New Testament. He might state that we sometimes go to the river Dee to perform the rite; and so we are told that John went to the river Jordan. He might say that the baptiser and the person to be baptised, in that case, go both into the water; and so, we are informed, did Philip and the Eunuch. He might then say, the baptiser immerses him *in* the river; and so we are told that John immersed his disciples *in* the river Jordan. He might then notice some circumstance that happened

after coming *out of* the water ; just as we are told of Christ, that straightway coming *out of* the water the heavens were opened. He might, moreover, refer to another place chosen for baptism, because there was *much water there*, as we are told that John was baptising in Aenon, for the same reason ; and he might notice that we represented our mode of baptism as being symbolical of our fellowship with Christ in his burial and resurrection. Now, would it be possible, after all this, to persuade any person that we, Baptists, baptise by sprinkling, and that all that had been stated was perfectly reconcilable with the practice of sprinkling ? Who would not smile at the following reasoning, in support of this hypothesis ?—Although it is stated of the Baptists, that both the baptiser and the person to be baptised go sometimes *into* the water, it does not follow that they are ever in the water at all, for we read in the New Testament of Jesus going into a mountain, which does not imply that he was under the ground ; so also, when we speak of a person coming *out of* the city, it does not imply that he was under the city, neither does the statement respecting their coming *out of* the water imply any thing more than that they came *from* the water. As to its being said that the person is *immersed*, that proves nothing ; for it is very common, when business *pours in* upon one, to say he is *immersed* in business ; so also, when one has been out in a rainy day, it is usual to say he has been *steeped* in rain, or *ducked* in rain ; and when one has been weeping, what so common as to say, he was *bathed* in tears ? There is no proof, therefore, that the Baptists perform the ordinance in any other way than by *sprinkling*, which is an action similar to the *pouring in* of business, said to be *immersion*, and the *pouring down* of rain, said to be *ducking*, a word of the same import.—The absurdity of all this would be very obvious as applied to our case, yet it is applied with all gravity to the case of the primitive baptisms, which exactly parallel !

Although we consider the argument in favour of immersion to be here complete, it may not be altogether useless to inquire,

IV.—What light the early history of the Church throws upon the subject ; and it is satisfactory to find that it is just what might have been expected, on the supposition that immersion was the primitive mode ; for, through every part of the Christian church for thirteen hundred years, the established mode of baptism continued to be immersion, as appears from the following short selection of evidences :—

1.—TESTIMONIES OF HISTORIANS AND LEARNED MEN.

*Mosheim*.—“ The sacrament of baptism was administered in this century (the first) without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by *immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font*.”

*Venema*.—“ It is without controversy that baptism in the primitive church was administered by *immersion into water*, and not by sprinkling.”

*Mr. J. Mede*.—“ There was no such thing as sprinkling used in the apostle’s days, nor for many ages after them.”

*Abp. Tillotson*.—“ Anciently those who were baptised were *immersed and buried in the water*.”

*Abp. Secker*.—“ Burying, as it were, the person baptised in the water, and raising him out again, without question, was anciently the more usual method.”

N. B.—The first recorded instance of sprinkling was that of Novation in the third century. “ He fell into a dangerous disease, and, because he was very like to die, he was sprinkled all over in bed.” To a question put to Cyprian by Magnus, “ Whether they are to be considered right Christians who are not washed in the water, but only sprinkled ;” Cyprian answered that, *necessity compelling it*, and God granting his *indulgence*, such baptism was to be esteemed valid.” But it was generally held that the person so baptised during sickness was unfit for office.

*Dr. Sam. Clarke*.—“ In the primitive times the manner of baptising was by *immersion*, or *dipping the whole body* into the water.”

*Bishop Taylor*.—“ The custom of the ancient churches was not sprinkling, but *immersion*.

*Dr. Wall*.—“ *Immersion* is so plain and clear, by an infinite

number of passages, that one cannot but pity the weak endeavours of such Pedobaptists as would maintain the negative of it."

*Vossius.*—"That the apostles *immersed* whom they baptised there is no doubt. And that the ancient church followed their example, is very clearly proved by innumerable testimonies of the Fathers."

*Mr. Reeves.*—"The ancients carefully observed *trine-immersion*, insomuch that, by the 'Canons Apostolical,' either bishop or presbyter who baptised without it *was deposed from the ministry.*"

*Encyc. Eccl.*—"It is evident that, during the first ages of the church, and for many centuries afterwards, the practice of immersion prevailed; and which, it seems, indeed, was never departed from, 'except where it was administered to a person at the point of death, or upon the bed of sickness.'

To these quotations, which might have been multiplied to a great extent, a few passages may be added,

## 2.—FROM EARLY CHRISTIANS THEMSELVES.

*Barnabas*, *Paul's companion in travel*, says, "We go down into the water, full of sin and pollutions, but come up again, bringing forth fruit."

A. D. 95.—*Hermes* says, "Men (in baptism) descend into the water, under an obligation to death, but ascend out of it, being appointed unto life."

A. D. 150.—*Justin Martyr.*—"None are allowed to partake of the eucharist but such as have been baptised in the laver of regeneration."

A. D. 204.—*Tertullian.*—"When we are ready to enter into the water we make our protestations before the minister, and in the church, that we renounce the devil and all his pomps and vanities; afterwards we are plunged into the water three times." "It is all one whether a person is washed in the sea or in a pond, in a fountain or in a river, in standing or in running water; nor is there any difference between those whom John dipped in Jordan, and those whom Peter dipped in the Tiber."

A. D. 360.—*Basil.*—"By three immersions the great mystery of baptism is accomplished."

A. D. 380.—*Chrysostom.*—"To be plunged into the water, and then to emerge out of it again, is a symbol of our descent into the grave, and our ascent out of it."

A. D. 385.—*Cyril.*—"Candidates are first anointed with sacred oil; they are then conducted to the laver, and asked three times if they believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, then they are dipped three times into the water, and retire out of it, three distinct efforts."—"As he who is plunged in the wat-

encompassed by it on every side, so they that are baptised by the Spirit are also wholly covered over."

### 3.—SUCCEEDING NOTICES OF BAPTISM.

A. D. 757.—Pope Gregory, on the agitation of the question, whether *three* immersions were necessary to complete baptism, decided that "*one* immersion was valid."

A. D. 789.—"Charles the Great commanded the Saxons, on pain of death, to receive baptism along with their infants, for which purpose, wooden tubs and other utensils were placed in the open air, and the new converts, with their children, were *immersed* into the profession of Christianity."

A. D. 1130.—"In ordinary cases, baptism in the church was thus regulated:—The candidate was exorcised and purified from all demoniacal and magical influence," and, after a number of ceremonies, "he was *dipped three times*, and on *coming out of the water*, was anointed with chrism, and crowned with other rites, all of the same nature."

Not long after this, in the year 1311, the Roman Church authorised sprinkling to be substituted for immersion, and subsequently the Council of Trent decreed the essentials of baptism to consist in the application of water in any form, in the name of the Trinity; but, up to the year 1311, immersion was the authorised practice in all the churches in the world; and (as Dr. Wall remarks) all that never owned the Pope's usurped power, nor (it may be added) have in any way been influenced by those that did, continue immersion to this day. To this class belong all the Christians in Asia, all in Africa, and about one-third part of Europe;" but we particularly notice,

### 4.—THE GREEK CHURCH.

From the days of the Apostles to the present time this Church (and the Greeks must be allowed to understand their own language) has practised immersion in all its sections, comprehending the Christians of "part of Greece, the Grecian Isles, Wallachia, Moldavia, Egypt, Abyssinia, Nubia, Lybia, Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Cilicia, Palestine, and Russia."

Referring to a Greek baptism, Dr. Pinkerton, agent of the Bible Society, says, "The day was excessively cold, being upwards of ten degrees of frost, and the water in the font almost freezing. I expressed my surprise to the priest that they did not use tepid water, seeing the infant had to be *dipped three times over head and ears in the icy bath.*"

#### 5.—EVEN IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

The *Rule* has ever been to immerse, and for many years the *practice* accorded with the *Rule*. The Rubric instructs the clergyman to "dip the child warily and discreetly into the water;" and the catechism refers to "the water *wherein* the person is baptised." It was "in the year 1549 (says Dr. Wall), that ~~an~~ exception for weak children first appeared" [in the English Church]. "Sprinkling began to prevail about the middle of the sixteenth century, and within the period of half a century afterwards, it prevailed to be the more general, as it is now almost the only way," [in the Church of England, though its Rubric requires dipping still.]

Nor is this all. It was only after much debate in the Westminster Assembly of Divines, that it was decided by a majority of *only one*, "that baptism is a *washing* with water," as in the Shorter Catechism, which, if there had been but one vote the other way, might have been "baptism is a *dipping* in water," and then immersion would have been the authorised mode in the Church of Scotland, as well as in the Church of England. As it is, the definition of baptism in the Shorter Catechism agrees better with the idea of immersion than of sprinkling. It is said to be a "*washing* with water." This includes immersion, but does not at all suggest the idea of sprinkling, which, although used among the Jews as a ceremonial purification, was not equivalent to washing. No Jew, who commanded to *wash* his clothes with water, or

flesh with water, would have been at liberty to sprinkle them only.

#### 6.—BAPTISTRIES.

The ancient Baptaries also corroborate the fact that baptism was administered by immersion in the early ages.

“ These buildings were of different forms, and some of them are of very high antiquity, as that of St. John, connected with the church of Constantinople, a very splendid and spacious edifice. This baptistry was very large, and was called the great Illuminary. In the middle was the bath, in which baptism was administered; it was supplied with water by pipes, and there were outer rooms for all concerned in baptism. In Italy, although the churches were numerous in some of the most considerable cities, there was only one general baptistry, to which all resorted. Of the baptistries in Rome, the Lateran is the most ancient. It was made out of an old mansion house, given by Constantine to Bishop Sylvester, about the year 320, and was endowed with a handsome income. Before that time baptisms were performed ‘either in private baths, or in subterraneous waters, or in any place without the city.’ A baptistry was prepared for the baptism of Clovis, king of France; and his majesty, with *three thousand of his subjects*, was immersed (says Mezeray) on Christmas day, in the year 496. The baptistry of Pisa, both externally and internally, presents a fine display of the most exquisite workmanship.”—See *Penny Cyclop.*—*Art. Bap. Encyc. Brit., &c.* “ The baptistry of Florence is remarkable for the beauty of its gates. The Italian baptistry, in appearance, is not dissimilar to the octagon in Ely cathedral.”—*Lond. Encyc. Art. Bap.*

Independently of these buildings which were erected specially for administering Christian baptism, there was every facility for immersion in eastern countries, in the early ages, as there is to this day. “ The Greek baths were usually annexed to the gymnasia, of which pastimes they were considered a part. The Roman baths were generally splendid buildings. It is said that in Rome there were eight hundred and fifty-six public baths; and, according to Fabricius, the excessive luxury of the Romans appeared in nothing more visible than in their baths. Agrippa built one hundred and sixty

places for bathing, where the citizens might be accommodated with either hot or cold water, free of expense. The baths of Caracalla were adorned with two hundred marble columns, and furnished with six hundred seats of the same material. But the baths of Dioclesian surpassed all the rest in magnificence, a hundred and forty thousand men being employed many years to build them." Those of Pompeii, lately cleared from the rubbish of two thousand years, are very splendid. "In modern Turkey, as well as among the ancients, bathing makes a part of diet and luxury, so that in every town and village there is a public bath. It is thus plain, that no difficulty existed in the east in performing the act of immersion in Christian baptism." Some have said immersion could not have been practised in Judea from scarcity of water. This is a very thoughtless objection. In Jerusalem alone, more water must have been consumed by the inhabitants every day, than would have been sufficient to baptise all the Christians of the apostolic age. Besides, it is a mistake to suppose that in Judea there was any such deficiency of water as this objection implies; for it is thus in promise described by Moses (Deut. viii. 7), "The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills." Deut. xi. 16, "The land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven." Indeed, to speak of difficulty in procuring water for immersion, in a country abounding with flocks and herds, and rich pasture land, is altogether out of the question, especially among a people, like the Jews, who were so much accustomed to bathings and ablutions as a part of their religious services.

## CONCLUSION.

Since, then, the proper meaning of the word baptise is to immerse or overwhelm—not to sprinkle, not to pour, not even to wash, except by consequence, all these ideas being expressed by other words in the Greek language; since all the metaphorical uses of the word accord with immersion; since the same meaning is attached to the word in Scripture, as in all other writings; since all the Christians in the world understood the word in the same way for thirteen hundred years, and acted accordingly; since all but those who have in some way been influenced by the Church of Rome, continue immersion to this day; we feel that it would in *us*, at least, be a presumptuous rejection of the authority of God, were we to refuse to submit to a command so plainly given, and given, too, on such a solemn occasion. To those whose minds are not satisfied by the evidence, which to us has been irresistible, we can only say, we cannot understand it. “Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.”—“To his own master every man standeth or falleth.” But not more convinced are we that baptism was appointed by Christ as a standing ordinance in his church, than we are convinced that immersion, *and immersion only*, was the mode of that baptism; and the only mode (except in cases of sickness) that was practised by the Church in every age, till about five centuries ago, when, in the western section of Christendom, *he*, one of whose characteristics in prophecy was that he was to “change times and laws,”—presumed to “change the ordinance of Him who is given to be Head over all things to the Church;” and decreed that sprinkling was a sufficient substitute for immersion, just as he decreed, in reference to the Lord’s Supper, that the bread without the cup was sufficient for the laity.

## PART II.

# SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

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### INTRODUCTION.

It is sometimes said that Baptists, in discussing the question of infant baptism, discard the Old Testament together, and make their appeal solely to the New. At this point we adopt, as an explanation of our views, a passage from a recent publication of Dr. Wardlaw on another subject, but which, as containing a general principle, applies equally to the present. He says, "It is surely natural and reasonable that, not being Jews, but Christians, and the subject of our controversy relating to the constitution not of the Jewish but the Christian Church, we should have recourse, for the determination of the points in debate, to the New Testament rather than to the Old—to the records of the law of Christ, than to those of the law of Moses—to the accounts given us of the constitution of the permanent kingdom of Heaven, than to those of the constitution of the ancient and temporary kingdom of Israel. It may be thought by some that our apparent anxiety to keep by the New Testament indicates a latent consciousness of imbecility, were the appeal made to the Old. Why, it has been asked, set aside any portion of the Bible from its due authority? we have the whole; why not take the whole? Our answer is, We *do* take the whole. We set aside no part from its due authority. It is precisely and specially our aim

to discover the authority of every part of it. The authority of every part we admit to be, in one respect, the same. It is the highest possible—for it is Divine. In this view, there was the same authority in the Jewish dispensation that there is in the Christian—in the institutes of Moses, as in those of Jesus. There is no question about this. The question relates exclusively not to authority, but to the purposes of the Divine Legislator, in regard to the permanent or the temporary obligation of his institutions. While we maintain the Divine authority of the institutions themselves, as requiring the implicit obedience of those to whom they were given; yet, if they were intended to be temporary, we violate the same authority by making the obligation of them permanent. If they were meant for a particular people, and for a special purpose, we are chargeable with disobedience to the legislating authority when we attempt to lay the obligation of them upon other people, and when we insist upon their continuance after their avowed and definite object has been answered. What we plead for is, that in taking the Scriptures for our guide we must take them with a due discrimination of the Divine intention in their several parts; inasmuch as that may be right and beneficial in the circumstances in which Divine wisdom appointed it, which may be wrong and detrimental in other circumstances; that may be wise and good for the time it was meant to last, and for the purposes it was intended to serve, which may be foolish and mischievous in other times and for other ends. That ‘the things which were written aforetime were written for our learning’ no one disputes; but, since we know that *all* was not intended to be permanent which the authority that wrote them instituted, the plain and simple inquiry is—*what is*, and *what is not?* And this question, so far as our present controversy is concerned, we now leave for future application,” as we proceed.

To the question, Who are the proper subjects of Baptism? we answer:

BELIEVERS, AND BELIEVERS ONLY.

And the one general reason that we assign for this, our distinguishing peculiarity—(for immersion, as we have shown, is no peculiarity of ours; the whole of the nominally Christian world having for many ages practised it, and by far the greater part of it continuing to practise it to this day)—we say, the one general reason that we assign for this, our one distinguishing peculiarity is, that

WE CAN FIND NO AUTHORITY FOR BAPTISING ANY OTHERS IN THE WORD OF GOD.

But it will be necessary to enter into the details of the Pedobaptist arguments, and we notice,

*I. The supposed connexion between Infant Baptism and Infant Salvation, or Christian privileges.*

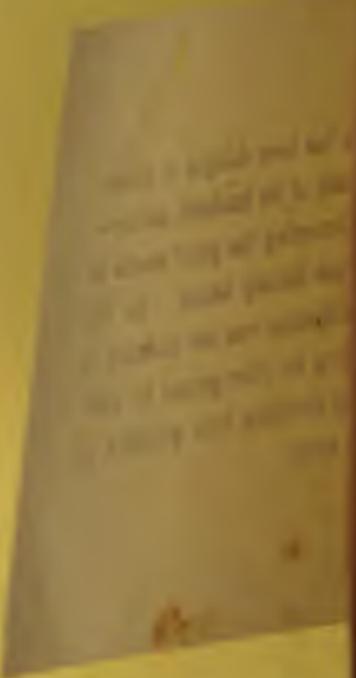
The only class besides believers for whom Baptism is claimed by the leading denominations in our part of the island, are *the infants of believers*; and it has been objected to our principle that it wears an unfavourable aspect to those who die in infancy. Now, at the very outset, we entirely repudiate this idea, and declare our conviction that the *whole weight* of the objection lies on the other side. We believe that the salvation of those dying in infancy, is not affected by the faith of the parents, nor influenced in the smallest degree by any ceremony that may be performed by their parents upon them.\* We do not believe that

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\* "Let all beware (says Dr. Wardlaw) of trusting, in any measure, for their salvation to any outward observance," (p. 213).—"It is evident that the pouring of a little water on an infant's face can, in itself, do it no good; and as little would the immersion of its whole body. The mere external recognition of its connexion with the Christian community *can be of no benefit*, except as associated with



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the Scriptures afford any evidence that those who die in infancy are excluded from the benefits of the Saviour's atonement ; but, while we cheerfully allow that many of our Pedobaptist brethren \* entertain the same benevolent views with ourselves on this subject, it is very obvious that their popular argument for infant baptism presents an appalling representation of the condition of the myriads who have died in infancy whose parents have not been believers. The argument is, that the infant children of believers are interested in the covenant of grace along with their parents, and, therefore, are entitled to baptism as the seal of that covenant. The denial of baptism, therefore, to such infants, is represented as a denial of their interest, in the covenant of grace, and an exclusion of them from its privileges. Now, the plain and obvious inference from this is, that the infants of all who are not believers are excluded from an interest in this covenant, and have no right to its privileges. In what an awful light does this present the condition of the overwhelming majority of infants who die without this supposed covenant relation of which so much is said !

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subsequent training, &c." (p. 189.)—Baptism, then, "can be of no benefit" to those who die in infancy ; and as to the results of "subsequent training," what difference is there between the children of our brethren and ours ?

\* Dr. Wardlaw, for instance, says (p. 123), "I gladly admit the fact that salvation is not confined to the seed of believers. I delight in the conviction of the salvation of all who die in infancy." But while the Doctor freely makes this admission, he strangely overlooks the fact, that this disclaimer, as it respects his *own private opinion*, does not in the smallest degree remove the objection from this popular but flimsy *argument* that, by refusing baptism to infants, the Baptist theory excludes infants from the covenant of grace, in virtue of which alone salvation flows to the human race.—Dr. Wardlaw's complaint of unfairness against Mr. Birt is founded on the misconception that what Mr. B. alleges against the Pedobaptist *system* was a charge against Pedobaptists *themselves*. Any one who reads the passages (p. 124) must be surprised at the Doctor's oversight.

The principles that we espouse possess no such frowning features towards any portion of the infant race.

But, even supposing that there were any truth in the notion (which, we are convinced, there is not) that it is by the *faith* of their parents that the infants of believers are shielded from danger during the period of infancy, the infants of believing Baptists would be as secure as the infants of believing Pedobaptists, unless it were alleged that the performance of the baptismal ceremony was necessary to complete their security, which is never pleaded but by the advocates of the figment of baptismal regeneration, for which our brethren will no more contend than we.

In what conceivable way, then, can it be shown, that the withholding of baptism from infants can deprive them of any privilege,\* more than the withholding from them of the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper? We can conceive of no blessing that the infants of our Pedobaptist brethren possess that ours do not. We have often asked our brethren to tell us what it is, but they have never been able to do it, and, we believe, no one ever will be able to do it to the end of time. If we mark the infants on whom the ceremony is performed, we can perceive no difference between them and our own. As they grow up, we do not perceive any more indications of piety in them than in our own. Nay, we do not perceive any recognition of their sup-

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\* The following remarks of Dr. Wardlaw on this point are well worthy of attention:—"Much has been said, and said sometimes very loosely, by Pedobaptists, of the rights and privileges of infants, and of the impropriety of abridging their privileges and abstracting their rights, by refusing baptism. But I would have it seriously considered that the right and privilege are not worth contending for, unless the ordinance be connected with parental instruction, discipline, and prayer. The profit to the child must be through the medium of the parent; and it has long appeared to me that it is *to the parent* rather than *to the child*, that infant baptism is, in the first instance, to be reckoned a privilege."

posed membership\* with the churches to which their parents belong, more than our own with our churches. Are they the objects of the church's prayers? So are ours. Do they receive religious instruction? So do ours. But are they treated as church members? Never, more than ours. They have to apply *for membership*, just as ours have; and are received on a personal profession of faith, just as ours are. If these supposed infant members grow up profligates, the honour of the church of their fathers is never considered to be involved in their profligacy; if they grow up to adorn the Gospel, the church of their fathers does not share the glory till they be formally *received* into its fellowship; and it often happens that, in their connecting themselves with another, the glory of their Christian character is borne away from that church of which they were declared to be members *during their infancy* (for with their infancy their supposed membership always dies away). What, then, is that vague privilege of which our children are deprived in consequence of

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\* In justice to Dr. Wardlaw, it is proper to state that, while he considers the infants' of believers in some vague sense *disciples* of Christ, always till they demonstrate by their conduct that they are not, he does not consider them members of any particular Church, but in a state of "training for the full fellowship of the people of God," (p. 185). In this he differs from many of his brethren; but can Dr. W. show us any passage of Scripture that countenances the notion that any of the "*disciples of Christ*" ought to be debarred from the "fellowship of his people"? We are sure he cannot. He says he regards the children of believers as *disciples*, in a situation somewhat analogous to that of the Ethiopian eunuch, who, although "a professed disciple of Jesus," was not constituted "a member of any particular Christian Church." But Dr. W. will not say, indeed he elsewhere denies it, that the *ground* on which he was admitted to baptism was not sufficient to obtain for him admission to any Christian Church where his lot might have been cast. Instead of the cases being "analogous," there is no similarity between them. The eunuch was a recognised believer in Christ, having a right to the fellowship of his people. The infants here referred to are declared to have no such right when they grow up till they give the same evidence of conversion that is required of the children of unbelievers!

their not being baptised? Nothing, we are convinced, but a naked fancy that vanishes before an impartial examination.

But we shall be reminded that the same remarks may be applied to infant circumcision; and yet we are told by the Apostle Paul, in answer to the query, "What advantage hath the Jew, and what profit is there in circumcision?" that there is "much every way." Yes, but *chiefly* that unto the Jew "were committed the oracles of God." If this, then, was the chief advantage, *our* unbaptised children have this advantage more eminently than the most distinguished circumcised Jew under the old economy. But, though the Jews had many outward advantages over the heathen nations around them, the same Apostle tells us in the immediate context, that, in a spiritual point of view, "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God;" and, elsewhere, that "circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God."

Still, if we had the same authority to baptise infants as the Jews had for their circumcision, although there were no perceptible advantages arising from it, our duty would be to obey; and, in our obedience, we might expect the Divine blessing, but not otherwise; for, of every unauthorised appendage to the ordinances of God, he will say, as he did to the Jews of old, when they brought their vain oblations, "Who hath required this at your hand?" It is of the greatest consequence, therefore, that, in reference to every such subject as that now under consideration, we make the inquiry, with all solemnity and solicitude, "What saith the Lord?"

In instituting this inquiry, our first object ought

be to ascertain the import of the terms of the institution ; and, therefore, we now proceed to consider,

## II. *The Commission to the Apostles.*

Mat. xxviii. 18. " And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth ; go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and lo ! I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." Mark xvi. 15. " And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel unto every creature ; he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be condemned."

Taking these two passages together, the one will help to explain the other ; for, as coming from the Divine Lawgiver, they cannot be inconsistent with each other. The command to "teach (or disciple) all nations," in the one passage, is synonymous with the command in the other, "to preach the Gospel unto every creature," with a view to the hearers believing it ; and the limitation of baptism, in the latter passage, to him "that believeth," must necessarily be understood as applying to the former also, possessing precisely the same force of law as if it were stated in both. To argue that, because the general term *nations* is used in one of the passages, and, as children constitute a part of all nations, therefore children ought to be baptised, is manifestly inconclusive ; for, it is equally true that hoary-headed rebels against God constitute a part of all nations, and therefore the argument would require that they also should be baptised. The sophism involved in the argument is this, that if infants ought to be baptised, *because* they constitute a part of all nations, it follows that all nations simply as *as nations* should be baptised, which would be as subversive of the Pedobaptist principle as of ours.

The *only principle* involved in the commission, therefore, as a rule for the practice of baptism, is, **HE AT BELIEVETH IS TO BE BAPTISED.** We are not

at liberty to diverge a single point from this prescription; if we do, we, to all intents and purposes, violate the law, and, therefore, infants are necessarily excluded from the baptism here enjoined, unless their right to it can be proved from some other authority. It does not exclude them, however, from any privilege, but from a rite which they can have no qualification to enjoy as a privilege; just as their exclusion from the Lord's table is no loss to them, because they are utterly incapable of deriving any advantage from it. This view, in itself conclusive, is corroborated by the subsequent command of Christ to his Apostles to *teach* the *baptised disciples\** TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS whatsoever *he had commanded them*. This could not possibly have been intended to apply to infants. To speak of such, *while infants*, as capable of receiving instruction, and capable of attending to divine commands, would be very absurd.

But it has been said this argument proves too much, and, therefore, proves nothing—if it proves that there is no authority for infant baptism in the commission,

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\* All that we shall say here on Dr. W.'s remarks on the discipleship of infants is, that they appear to us unworthy of his good sense, and inconsistent with his theology. The following passage will explain our meaning:—"The children of believers are learners, and, as *far as we can judge*, lambs of the flock of the 'good Shepherd.' Indications of the contrary *may* present themselves, *sometimes earlier* and *sometimes later*; but, in forming our estimate, we must make allowances for the peculiarities of childhood, and not foolishly look for the same manifestation of the power of the truth in a babe, which we expect in a full grown man." To be at all in point, it must be remembered that the children must not be those who are capable of affording evidence of being under "the power of the truth," as "*babes in Christ*;" all such have a clear right to baptism on our principles as well as on Dr. Wardlaw's. But for Dr. W. to say that, "*until* the principles which are instilled into the child's mind by early tuition are either *avowedly rejected*, or are shown to be *professed* without influence on the heart and life," the child ought to be recognized as a disciple of Christ, is what we cannot understand. Nay, we believe it to be absolutely irreconcileable with Wardlaw's religious principles. Besides, if we are not entituled to say that the children of believers are not "*disciples*" of Christ,

it is argued, it proves also that infants cannot be saved ; and, on the same principle, it has been remarked, that the passage, "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat," would prove that children ought to be starved, because they cannot work. We cannot but express our astonishment that reasonable men can allow themselves to be imposed upon by such a shallow sophism as this. Our argument involves no such conclusion ; and the fallacy lies in the mis-statement of it, by putting more into the conclusion than the premises contain. Properly stated, it stands thus :—

(1.) Since, *according to the commission*, FAITH IS NECESSARY as a pre-requisite to baptism and salvation, and since UNBELIEF is stated as a disqualification for heaven, the law is only applicable to those who are *capable of faith and unbelief*. And so also,

Since *working* for their food is required of those who have no other means of support, the law applies only to those who are *able to work*. Then,

(2.) Since, *according to the commission*, no one *capable of faith* has a right to baptism *without faith*, so, no one *capable of faith* can be saved *without faith*.

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they either "avowedly" reject the truth, or, professing it, belie their profession, why are they not admitted to all the privileges of disciples? Why, as we have already urged, are they not admitted, for instance, to the Lord's supper, which was unquestionably intended for "*disciples*?" Is not the command to *disciples* explicit—"Do this in remembrance of me—drink ye ALL OF IT?" Dr. W. himself says (p. 192), "I am not aware, from any facts or principles in the New Testament, of any profession of faith being sufficient for admission to baptism that is not sufficient for admission to the Lord's supper and the full fellowship of the Church of Christ. Nor am I aware of the existence, in apostolic times, of any such anomalous description of persons as those who were baptised but were not admitted to Church fellowship." This, of course, applies to adults, but, as a general principle, it applies to all, until an exception be *proved*; and we are not aware of any principle that excludes children from the Lord's table, that will not equally exclude them from baptism.

Here the conclusion is legitimate, we are willing to abide by it, and all that our argument proves, is, that the commission has no reference to infants.\* But, if infant baptism can be proved *on other grounds*, we at once admit that the commission presents no more obstacles to it than it does to infant salvation, or than the passage, "If any man," &c., does to infant sustenance. Still, however, it would be a separate institution, and would not supersede the baptism of the believer, unless a special intimation were given to that effect. To those, however, who put in a plea for infant baptism, on the ground that *faith* as a pre-requisite for baptism, does not exclude infants, *because they are incapable of it*, we reply, that, by the same argument, everything *incapable of faith*, whether animate or inanimate, might be baptised!

The conclusion, then, at which we have arrived is, that the apostolical commission requires all who believe the Gospel to profess their faith by baptism; and that it affords no authority for the baptism of infants, because, as Dr. Wardlaw, we have seen, freely admits, the language refers only to those "to whom the Gospel *could be preached*, viz., to *adults*, who were capable of

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\* We are happy to find that this is the view taken of the passage by Dr. Wardlaw. He says (p. 183), "When it is said, 'He that believeth,' &c., it is very manifest, from the nature of the thing, and from the charge in the preceding verse, 'Go, preach the Gospel to every creature,' that the language refers to all mankind in general, to whom the gospel *could be preached*; that is, to *adults* who were *capable of hearing and understanding* what was said."—This is all that we contend for; and Dr. W. thus in effect avows his belief that the *Commission* affords no authority for the baptism of infants, because "the language refers" not to *them*, but "to *adults*." As to the complaint that follows of supposed "want of candour in the Baptists" (of which unfair complaint, by the way, Dr. W. is sufficiently lavish), it arises entirely from misapprehension. We do apply precisely "the same principle of interpretation" to the "clause" that refers to "baptism," that we do to the "clause" that refers to "salvation," i. e., we affirm, just what Dr. W. allows, viz., that the Commission has *no reference* to either the *baptism* or *salvation* of infants, in fact does not refer to infants at all.

*hearing and understanding* what was said." Moreover, that although it could be proved from any other part of Scripture that infants ought to be baptised, still it would be the duty of every believer to obey the law of the commission by submitting to baptism, as the established mode of his making a voluntary profession of his faith ; unless, indeed, it could be also proved that wherever *infant baptism* had taken place, the baptism enjoined in the commission was superseded. This requires the most serious consideration of every one who has received the truth in the love of it. Every believer who has not professed his faith by baptism ought to consider whether the language does not apply to him that was addressed to Paul on his conversion (and Paul had been circumcised the eighth day, was of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews)—" *And now, why tarriest thou, arise and be baptised.*"

### III. *Other commands on the subject of Baptism.*

The next command relative to baptism, is—

Acts ii. 37—" Now, when they heard this they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, *Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" [The succeeding promise will be considered afterwards.]

Respecting the command here given there can be no mistake. It was addressed to persons under great concern, and every one of them was commanded to *repent* and be baptised. The command, therefore, affords no authority for the baptism of any but those *who repent*. The next command is that given to the Apostle Paul by Ananias, in the following terms:—

Acts xxii. 14.—" And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldest know his will, &c. And now, why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptised, and wash away 'us, calling on the name of the Lord."

The only remark that seems to be suggested by this passage is, that it is the *immediate* duty of every one who turns from sin to attend to the ordinance enjoined.

These appear to be all the direct commands of Scripture on the subject of baptism, and, in all of them, there is such a recognition of faith and repentance as pre-requisites to it, that no room is left in them for the supposition that the ordinance was ever intended for infants. Other two passages akin to these will close this part of the argument, viz. *that the Scriptures contain no precept nor rule for the baptism of infants* :—

Acts x. 11—18.—“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the words, &c. “Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptised *which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?* And he commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord.”

In this case the possession of miraculous gifts in Peter’s hearers was the ground on which they were commanded to be baptised ; and, therefore, the authority from it is less comprehensive than that of any of the preceding.

Acts viii. 36.—“And as they [Philip and the eunuch] went on their way, they came to a certain water ; and the eunuch said, See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptised ? And Philip said, *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.*”

Here, a hearty belief of the truth respecting the Messiah is stated by the Evangelist as the requisite qualification for baptism, and *nothing less*, in any case, does this passage authorise.

These are all the passages that contain the law or rule of baptism, and the following is the conclusion to which not a few candid Pedobaptists have come, after examining them.

*Bishop Burnet.* “There is no express precept or rule given in the New Testament for the baptism of infants.”

*Mr. S. Palmer.* "There is nothing in the words of the institution respecting the baptism of infants: there is not a single precept for this practice through the whole New Testament."

*Luther.* "It cannot be proved by the sacred Scripture that infant baptism was instituted by Christ."

But, while Dr. Wardlaw does not pretend that there is any direct law for infant baptism in the New Testament, he pleads that the Jewish law of church membership is still in force.

He says (p. 53), "If the covenant made with Abraham be indeed God's everlasting covenant of grace, and if the sign and seal of that covenant was administered by God's command to the children of those who professed the faith of Abraham, and to them, in their turn, became, as it had been to him, a 'seal of the righteousness of faith'—if these things be so, then where, we ask, is any change in the constitution of the covenant, in this respect, pointed out? When were children excluded, and by what law? Let an express repealing statute be shown us, and we will immediately relinquish our practice." And afterwards (p. 73) he urges the plea that baptism has come in the room of circumcision.

Now, it appears very plain to us that the great fallacy that runs through, vitiates, and mystifies the whole of Dr. Wardlaw's reasoning on these and other parts of the Jewish economy is, his confounding the obvious distinction between the literalities of that economy, and the great spiritual objects and subjects of which it was typical. He reasons from the literal to the spiritual, and *vice versa*, with a confusion that appears in none of his other writings, and hence imagines he detects inconsistencies in Dr. Cox, Mr. M'Lean, and Mr. Kinghorn, which have no foundation but in his own misapprehensions; which is the more remarkable, because, in other circumstances, no man contends more strenuously for the distinction than he. We shall have occasion to enter more fully into this subject afterwards. In the meantime, it is only necessary to show the futility of the grounds on which the Doctor calls for a distinct statute for repealing the law that regu-

ited circumcision, as a warrant for withholding baptism from infants. They are as follow:—

1. He assumes that “the covenant made with Abraham,” *which comprehended all his posterity in their generations* (for it is only in this sense that circumcision was its seal to the Jews as a people), “was God’s everlasting covenant of grace.” The bare statement of this assumption, in its undisguised form, we deem quite sufficient to expose its fallacy.

2. He assumes the existence of a *spiritual connexion*, under the old economy, between children and their parents in the covenant of grace. It is not necessary for us to say a word in refutation of this false assumption. Dr. W. himself furnishes a sufficient refutation elsewhere. He says (p. 106), “The grace of God is not imparted by fleshly birth.” P. 214, “Mere natural descent from Abraham could not save the Jews, neither can mere natural relation to godly parents save us. Those Jews perished without remedy, notwithstanding their circumcision, who refused to submit themselves to the righteousness of God; so must all without remedy perish, notwithstanding their baptism and other outward privileges, who are not ‘born again,’ by being made partakers of like precious faith with Abraham.” We are quite at a loss to know what can be meant by children being *in the covenant of grace*, while yet *no grace is imparted*; we cannot comprehend how any can be *interested* in that covenant who yet “perish without remedy.”

When Dr. Wardlaw asks, “When were children excluded” from their supposed interest in “God’s everlasting covenant,” *arising from the faith of their parents?* we ask, in reply, “When were they *admitted* on that ground?” Such a connexion between parents and children as Dr. Wardlaw’s argument requires never existed under any dispensation. Let our brethren say plainly, and without circumlocution, is it so, that as soon as a man believes the Gospel, and has

his sins forgiven, and is made a partaker of the other blessings of "the covenant of grace," his children are immediately put in possession of the same blessings along with them? Dr. Wardlaw virtually answers, "No."—Was it ever so? *Never.*—"What!" it may be said, "will it be denied that Abraham's posterity were connected with him in the covenant of circumcision?" No; but that covenant, *as made with him and his natural seed*, did not involve a *spiritual connexion*—did not interest them with him in the blessings of salvation.—"What!" it may be said again (and it is here that Dr. Wardlaw so frequently forgets himself), "will it be denied that the Abrahamic covenant *comprehended* spiritual blessings, and that circumcision, its token, had a spiritual meaning?" No; this will not be denied either. But then, the covenant, in that sense, was not made with the *fleshy seed* of Abraham, *as such*; in that sense it is "they which be *of faith* who are blessed with faithful Abraham." "If ye be Christ's, *then* are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

3. Dr. Wardlaw assumes that baptism, under the new dispensation, is substituted for circumcision under the old. If he merely meant that baptism came in the room of circumcision, in the sense of its being the initiatory rite in the Christian dispensation, as circumcision was in the Jewish, there could be no objection to the sentiment; but, when the application of the rite to the same classes is contended for, the objections are insuperable. (1.) If the one supplied the place of the other, why was baptism administered to those who were already circumcised? (2.) How are we to account for the difficulty of settling the question, whether it was necessary that the believing Gentiles, *who had been baptised*, should also be *circumcised*? (See Acts xv.) Would not the simple statement that they had been *baptised* have settled the point at once, if the one rite was a *substitute* for the other? (3.) If baptism came in the room of circumcision, so that the rule

of the one ought to be the rule of the other, why is the rule not applied? Why are not the *adult* members of the believer's family baptised as well as the *infants*? *All the men of Abraham's house were circumcised*.—Why are not all born in the believer's house baptised? *All such in Abraham's house were circumcised*.—Why are not the servants of believers baptised? *Abraham's servants were all circumcised*. We now ask Dr. Wardlaw, in turn, “When were all these classes excluded from the initiatory rite, and by what law?” He distinctly maintains the general principle that, *if we are to proceed at all according to Jewish rules, we are bound to follow them out, and not “apply them in a partial and inconsistent way.”* He is bound, therefore, either to follow out the rule entirely, or entirely abandon it; for there is no middle course open for him, because there is no existing law of partial abrogation. (4.) We know that the law of baptism recognises no distinction of the sexes, but the law of circumcision did; therefore, the practice of the one was never intended to be regulated by the law of the other.

On the whole, Dr. Wardlaw's notion, that the law of circumcision applies to baptism, is altogether a chimera. The law of baptism rests on its own exclusive basis, viz. the direct command of the Lawgiver; and we have seen that Dr. W. himself admits that it has no reference to infants.

We repeat, then, that, throughout the whole of the sacred Scriptures not a single *precept* can be produced for the practice of infant baptism.

We now come to what may be considered as an authoritative commentary on the law of Christian baptism, viz. :—

#### IV. *The Examples of Baptism after the Commission was given.*

Acts ii. 41. “Then *they that gladly received his word* were **BAPTISED**, and the same day there were added unto them al-

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other, why is the adult members of all as the *infants*? *circumcised*.—Why are baptised? *All uncircumcised*.—Why are baptised? *Abraham's* now ask Dr. Ward. classes excluded that law?" He dis- ple that, *if we are in rules, we are bound by them in a partial* nd, therefore, either entirely abandon it; en for him, because brogation. (4.) We gnises no distinction mcision did; there- ever intended to be

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three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer." [Here there is not the most distant allusion to infants.]

Acts viii. 12. "But when they (the Samaritans) believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women. [Not a syllable about children.]

Acts viii. 37. "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest [be baptised]. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptised him." [Under the former head we noticed that faith was required before baptism—here we find the *profession of faith* made before the ordinance was administered].

Acts ix. 18. "And immediately there fell from his (Paul's) eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptised."

Acts xviii. 8. "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptised."

Acts xix. 1. "Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus, and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptised? And they said, unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, That they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Thus far we have not been able to discover a single trace of the baptism of an infant. We have the baptisms recorded of them "that gladly received the word of God"—of them "that believed"—of "men"—of "men and women;" but not one word of a child in all the apostolic history. There are some other examples of baptism, however, which are supposed to include them, and these, because of the importance attached to them, deserve a separate consideration, viz. :—

#### V. *The Examples of Household Baptism.*

There are three cases recorded of the baptism of "households; but, supposing there had been no circum-

stances mentioned respecting these households, tending to throw light on the question whether there were infants in them or not, no conclusion could have been warrantably drawn from them that infants ought to be baptised; for,

*First*, We have the record of whole houses *believing*, even when baptism is not mentioned; thus, Acts xviii. 8, already quoted, "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, *believed on the Lord with all his house.*" John v. 23, "So the father knew that it was the same hour in the which Jesus said unto them, Thy son liveth, and *himself believed, and his whole house.*" So (Acts x. 2), We are told of Cornelius, that he was a devout man, and one that feared God *with all his house.*"

Here, then, since we have the account of whole houses *believing and fearing God*, and the idea of infants does not occur to us, why, if the clause were added, "AND WERE BAPTISED," should the idea of infants be suggested? It is not because it would, in that case, necessarily *include* the idea more than in the other; but, because it is suggested by the existing practice of Pedobaptism. The idea of infants being baptised would never occur to any one from hearing of *households* being baptised by the Baptist missionaries abroad, or Baptist ministers at home.

Mr. Pengilly states that he himself has baptised households, and, among others, a "*Lydia and her household,*" and yet *he never baptised a child.* Hence, without proof of infant baptism from another quarter, it cannot be drawn from the simple fact, that households were baptised, which was a necessary consequence when households *believed*. But,

*Secondly*, Not only have we the accounts of the *conversions* of several households in the primitive age, whose *baptisms* are not recorded—there are circumstances also mentioned respecting the households whose

baptisms *are recorded*, that preclude all warrant from them for infant baptism.

The first of these instances is,

Acts xvi. 14. "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptised *and her household*, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there," &c.—ver. 40. "And they [Paul and Silas, who had been imprisoned] went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them and departed."

Here, (1), it might be sufficient to remark, that there is no evidence that there was a single child connected with the household of Lydia, and, without the *proof* of her *having* any offspring, it is impossible to prove the baptism of any; the burden of proof lies upon the advocates of infant baptism.\*

But, (2), Who were the brethren that Paul and Silas "comforted" in Lydia's house, after their deliverance from prison? We read of none but Lydia's household who were *baptized* before, although there might

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Second instance,

Acts xvi. 30. "And [the jailor] brought them [Paul and Silas] out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, *and to all that were in his house*. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed [not baptised] their stripes, and was baptised, he and all his straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, *and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house.*"

It is only necessary to notice on this passage, that, since we are expressly told, that to *all who were in the jailor's house* the word of the Lord *was spoken*, and that "*all his house*" *believed in God, and rejoiced*; the very *suggestion* of infants is precluded; and hence the impossibility of drawing an argument of any kind from it, in behalf of infant baptism.

The last instance of the baptism of a household is recorded in

1 Cor. i. 14. "And I baptised also the house of Stephanus." Connect this with chap. xvi. 15. "Ye know the house of Stephanus, that it is *the first fruits of Achaia*, and that they have *addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints*."

It is almost superfluous to remark, that what is stated respecting "*the first fruits*" of the Apostle's ministry in Achaia, *and they addicting themselves to the ministry of the saints*, can have no reference to infants.

Thus, we find that the circumstances mentioned respecting the households are such as to preclude their being produced as instances of infant baptism; for none of these circumstances will apply to infants.

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Thus, we find that the circumstances mentioned respecting the households are such as to preclude their being produced as instances of infant baptism; for none of these circumstances will apply to infants.

Before leaving this part of the subject, it may be

necessary to notice a remark of Dr. Wardlaw's, viz. that "what is mentioned of the households of the jailor, Stephanus," &c., by no means implies that there were no children in these households; for we never scruple about such expressions as, "The whole family are serious," &c., " notwithstanding the infants or young children that may be in the family, which are necessarily excluded." It is most surprising that the Doctor did not perceive that this remark cuts up, by the very roots, the argument for infant baptism, drawn from the baptism of households. If the expression, "The whole family are serious," may be used with propriety in cases where there are infants in the family, but who, of course, cannot be included in the expression, is it not equally obvious that, in similar circumstances, the expression, "The whole family were *baptised*," does not necessarily include infants? Besides, unless infant baptism can be proved on other grounds, the fact that infants *may* have been in these families proves nothing. In the first place, then, it is necessary to prove that these households *must* have contained infants—the burden of proof, as we have already noticed, rests upon those who maintain infant baptism. But although this could be proved, which is impossible, Dr. Wardlaw has taught us that *still* it would furnish no proof of their baptism; for it is quite common to speak of "a whole family being serious—a whole family being converted at once," when infants are necessarily excluded; and, if they be excluded *in the one case*, they must be excluded in the *other also*, till infant baptism be proved on other grounds.

*Thirdly*, The mention of the baptism of *households* is no proof of the baptism of *infants*, because there are many households without infants.

*Fourthly*, The term *house* is often used as comprehending all descendants, as, Gen. xlvi. 27, "All the souls of the *house* of Jacob which came into Egypt were threescore and ten." Jer. xxxvi. 18, "And Jeremiah said unto the *house* of the Rechabites, Thus

saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, because ye have obeyed the voice of Jonadab your father," &c. If, therefore, the *infant child* ought to be baptised, simply because it is included in the term *house*, so also ought the *adult son, grandson, &c.* We anticipate the objection, that they who are of age ought to be permitted to judge for themselves;—we know they should, but this destroys the argument drawn from the fact that infants are included in the term *house*, which equally includes *adults*. Moreover, we know that the *men* of Abraham's house were required to be circumcised as well as the *children*.

*Fifthly*, The term *household* sometimes conveys the sense of servants or attendants, rather than children, as, Phil. iv. 22, "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's *household*." Gen. xviii. 19, "I know him that he will command his children, *and his household* after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." The word here used [*oikos*] is the very word respecting which Dr. Wardlaw says (p. 126), "It should be noticed that a man's house [*oikos*] most properly means his children, his offspring, his *descendants*; and is generally used to denote even these exclusively." Here, however, it is used in *distinction* from "children." And it is often used as *including* both servants and children, as, Gen. xlivi. 19, "And they came near to the steward of Joseph's *house*" or *household*. Therefore, if children ought to be baptised because they are included in the term *household*, so ought servants. The term *oikos* nowhere means exclusively *infant offspring*, but either *descendants*, of whatever age, or members of the family of whatever description.

On all these grounds, it is very obvious that the baptism of the three households mentioned during the whole of the apostolic age,—without proof that there was a single infant in them, but presumptive evidence to the contrary, affords no warrant whatever for the baptism of infants, especially when, although it could

have been proved that there were infants in them, it would not have followed that they were baptised.

But, says Dr. Wardlaw, p. 148,

"I have one other particular to add. It is the remarkable fact of the entire absence, so far as my recollection serves me, of any thing resembling the baptism of households or families in the accounts of the propagation of the Gospel by our Baptist brethren." P. 149. "This fact is a strong corroborative proof that there is some difference between their practice and that of the Apostles!"

We wonder, when the Doctor wrote these sentences, that the passage was not at once suggested to him, "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." On the comparison of missionary records, our Pedobaptist brethren ought, above everything, to be silent. Whether it be "a fact" or not, that Dr. W. here notices, we have not at present the means of determining, without more research than we have time for. Dr. W. does not affirm that it is, and our impression is that it is not. But, be that as it may, if there be no *baptisms* of families recorded in the *Baptist Missionary Chronicle*, it may be because there are no *conversions* of families recorded; and over these neither Baptist nor Pedobaptist missionaries have any control. We have twice as many accounts in the New Testament of households that *believed* as we have of the *baptism* of households; and yet we should think it a poor argument against the scriptural character of the preaching of Pedobaptist missionaries, that we meet with no accounts of the conversion of *households* at a time under it.

Dr. Wardlaw's argument rests on the assumption that, according to the New Testament records, the families of such as *believed* were, *as a matter of course, baptised*. This appears to us to be a most unwarrantable assumption, so much so, that the details of the New Testament cannot be reconciled with it, but by suppositions that seem incredible.

The following, except the households, are the whole

f them. We repeat them together in the order in which they occur in the book of Acts; and let any man of candour say if they are what we may conclude they would have been, if infant baptism had been practised by the Apostles.

Chap. ii. 41. "Then *they that gladly received his word were baptised*; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship," &c.

Chap. viii. 12. "But when *they believed Philip* preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, *they were baptised, both men and women.*"

Ver. 36. "And as they (Philip and the eunuch) went on their way, they came unto a certain water, and the eunuch said, See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptised? And Philip said, *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.* And he answered and said, I believe, &c. ; and he baptised him."

Chap. ix. 18. "And he (Paul) arose and was baptised."

Chap. x. 47. "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptised, who *have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?* And he commanded *them* to be baptised in the name of the Lord."

Chap. xviii. 8. "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord, with all his house, and many of the Corinthians hearing, *believed, and were baptised.*"

Chap. xix. 5. "When they heard this (the address of Paul) they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

These, with the exception of the two households noticed above, are all the accounts of baptism recorded in the book of Acts. Let them now be compared with the accounts furnished by Pedobaptist missionaries, and the difference must strike the most careless reader. Take any Report of the London Missionary Society—take, for instance, the last, and how marked is the difference! We take our quotations in the order in which they occur in the Report, without selection, just as we have done in quoting from the Acts:—

*Roby Town.*—“Since my last (says Mr. Henry), 10 *adults* and 12 *children* have been baptised.”

*Tubuai*.—“Before leaving, Mr. Rogerson preached to about 100 persons, baptised 17 *children*, and appointed 2 *deacons*.”

*Rurutu*.—“Mr. Orsmond admitted 5 members to the church, making the whole number 17, and baptised 25 *children*.”

*Manno*.—“Mr. Heath has baptised 85 *adults* and 44 *children*, which, added to those previously baptised, make a total of 646 *adults* and 234 *children*.”

*Tutuila*.—“The church contains 5 members, and the number of *adults* Mr. Murray has baptised is 11.”

*Malacca*.—“In the course of the year, 19 Chinese *children* and *adults* have been baptised.”

At Singapore only one convert was baptised; at Batavia, 3 women.

*Vizagapatam*.—“Eight *adults* have been baptised.”

*Cuddapah*.—“During the year (says M. Howell), 16 *adults* and 9 *children* have been baptised, and 9 persons have been admitted to church fellowship.”

Sixteen years ago, Mr. Howell reported that at this place he had “baptised 74 men, 25 women, — boys, and 21 girls,” those baptised previously to his going thither being “26 persons.” How many he has baptised during the last sixteen years, we cannot tell; but the number of members, after all, is, up to last Report, only 29! Moreover, although 16 *adults* and 9 *children* have been baptised during the past year, only 9 members have been added to the church! So at Tutuila, the church consists of only 5 members, though Mr. Murray has himself baptised 11! How is this? Hear Mr. Howell in his Letter, 1st January, 1825.

“Although all may not be savingly converted to God, yet I have been induced to baptise them, as having nominally embraced Christianity; and I trust, under the stated preaching of the Gospel, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, they *will be* savingly impressed, and be brought to feel and know their real state *before being admitted to the Lord's Supper*”!

We know that Dr. Wardlaw and others cannot but disapprove of such a perversion of the ordinance of baptism; but, setting this aside, who can compare the above notices of baptism from the first half of the London Missionary Society's Report, with the notices

of the ordinance in the New Testament, without perceiving at a glance their inconsistency with each other?—without perceiving that the practice of Pedobaptist missionaries is very different from that of the inspired men to whom the commission to baptise was first given?"

Thus far, then, we have found nothing approaching to a warrant for infant baptism. We have examined all the commands on the subject of baptism, and have found that they apply to believers, and believers only. We have also examined the examples of baptism, but not one example in the whole history of the primitive church have we found of the baptism of an infant. Still we are willing to follow our brethren through all their arguments, and therefore we proceed next to consider the question—

*VI. Why have we no account in the New Testament of the baptism, in adult years, of any who were born of Christian parents?*

Dr. Wardlaw states the objection thus:—"We have no recorded instance of the baptism of any person grown to manhood that had been born of Jewish or of Gentile proselytes to the faith" [Query, have we an instance of the *conversion* of any that were not baptised *on a profession of their faith?*] ; "nor have we, in any of the apostolic epistles, the remotest allusion, in the form of direction or of warning, to the reception of such children *by baptism*" [Query, have we a single allusion to the reception of any *without baptism?*] "into the Christian church, upon their professing the faith in which they had been brought up."

The reply to this is obvious. We have no recorded instance of the *admission to church-fellowship* "of any person grown to manhood that had been born of Jewish or Gentile proselytes." Does it, therefore, follow that there were none?

The truth is, that no distinctions arising from natural relationship were recognised in the primiti-

churches as constituting any claim to gospel-ordinances ; and, therefore, no such "directions or warnings" as those referred to by Dr. Wardlaw were in the least degree necessary. "Think not to say within yourselves, *we have Abraham to our father*," conveys the spirit of all the "warnings" that were necessary on this head, and all that were given. Dr. Wardlaw knows very well that, for several ages, there have been many Baptist churches in England and America, but how many "recorded instances" in church history will he find of the baptism of persons grown to manhood that had been born of *Baptists*? We question if he will find *one* of whom there is not also an account of his *conversion*; but these must not be taken into account in drawing a parallel between the history of the Baptists and the history of the primitive church; because, in the latter we have no account of the *conversion* of adults who had been born of Christian parents. Now, will Dr. Wardlaw say that a stranger to Baptist principles would be justified in concluding that the reason why the baptism of the posterity of Baptists is not recorded in church-history, is, that *they were baptised in infancy*? Yet this is the very argument used by himself in reference to the primitive Christians! But what will our Pedobaptist friends say to the fact that, several ages after the Apostles, such men as "Chrysostom, Jerome of Stryden, Theodore the emperor, Gregory Nazianzen, Augustine, Ambrose, Polycrates, Nectaries, Basil, son of Basil, one of the Christian bishops," &c., were not baptised till they made a personal profession of their faith, though they are recorded to have been born of Christian parents? Basil's "grandfather was a martyr, and he was educated, like a second Timothy, under his gracious mother; yet he was baptised in Jordan by Maximus, on the profession of his own faith, and became a learned man and a great preacher." One instance of this kind, in its bearing on practice of the Church in the age in which it took

lace, is worth a score of objections such as that we have now been considering. We now come to notice,

**VII. *The addresses to children in some of the Epistles.***

Such, we are reminded, are commanded in the epistles, to "obey their parents," which implies that there were children connected with the churches. True, but all that this implies (if it was as church-members that they were addressed) is, that *some* children may be church-members. This, we cheerfully admit; for many children have been believers of the Gospel, and have, therefore, been entitled to baptism and every other Christian privilege that they were competent to enjoy. Would that such children were more numerous in all our churches than they are! It ought to be noticed, however, that the term "children" in Scripture, by no means necessarily implies very young children, but is extended in its meaning to be equivalent to sons and daughters. Thus, Mat. x. 21, "The children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death." Chap. xx. 20, "Then came the mother of Zebedee's children, with her sons, worshipping him, and saying," &c. The term "child" was applied in the east to minors of all ages during their minority. Thus, in Gen. xxxvii. 30, Joseph is called a *child*, though he must have been sixteen years of age. 1 Sam. ii. 18, "Samuel ministered before the *Lord*, being a *child*." Gal. iv. 1, "Now I say, that the heir, *as long as he is a child*, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be *lord of all*." The term children, then, is far too vague to rest an argument on for infant membership.

**VIII. *Federal Holiness of Children considered.***

We may next refer to

1 Cor. vii. 13, 14. "And the woman that hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let

not leave him ; for the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband ; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy."

In the first place, for the mere sake of argument, we shall allow all that our Pedobaptist friends contend for—we shall suppose, for instance, that a heathen family, consisting of man, wife, and several children, all (but one or two of the youngest) active worshippers of Jupiter or Apollo, Vishnoo or Brahma, are brought within reach of Christianity, and that the mother of the family cordially embraces the truth. What then? We shall then allow that the idolatrous husband is "sanctified by the wife," and that all the "children," from the sucking child to the oldest idolater in the family, become, in the Pedobaptist sense, "holy," in consequence of the faith of the Christian mother, and the consequent *sanctification* of the still idolatrous father. What then? Not one of them would be fit subjects for baptism, the rule of which is NOT—*Let those who are, in some undefined sense, "holy," be baptised* ; but, "if thou *believest with all thine heart* thou mayest." Whatever meaning, therefore, may be attached to the word "holy," it cannot furnish a warrant for the baptism of the party to whom the term is applied, because it is *faith* and not relative *holiness* that is the prescribed term of baptism.

But, secondly, it is evident that, whatever the *holiness* referred to in this passage may mean, it is derived from the combined faith of the believing parent, with the *sanctification* (whatever that may mean) of the *unbelieving partner* ; and, as the stream cannot rise higher than the fountain, if the "holy children," whatever their ages may be, ought to be baptised (and there is no distinction of age in the passage), their *unbelieving* father ought to be baptised also, for he is said to be "*SANCTIFIED by the wife*." Such is the extravagant conclusion to which this argument leads ; and hence, as proving far too much, it proves nothing.

Were it not, however, for the supposition that this passage affords some countenance to infant baptism, few, we presume, would hesitate to admit that the "holiness" here has a reference to the Jewish law of marriage, which prohibited all alliance with the people of other nations, who were all held to be unclean. Hence, when the Jews of the captivity were reprehended (Ezra ix. 2) for having "taken of the daughters of the Canaanites, &c. for themselves, and for their sons, so that the *holy seed* had mingled themselves with the people of those lands," we are told (chap. xi. 3), that "there assembled unto Ezra, out of Israel, a very great congregation of men, and women, and children; for the people wept very sore. And Shechaniah answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land; yet now is there hope in Israel concerning this thing. Now, therefore, let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, *and such as are born of them*, according to the counsel of my Lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; **AND LET IT BE DONE ACCORDING TO THE LAW.**" (See also Neh. xiii. 23, to the end.)

Here we find a perfectly satisfactory key to the difficulty of the Corinthians, who seem to have been apprehensive that the same law existed against the *believer* remaining in connexion with an *unbeliever*, that existed against the *Jew* remaining in connexion with a *Canaanite*. This difficulty was solved by the apostle's reply that, under the new economy, separation was not necessary; for "the unbelieving husband is sanctified by [or to] the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by [or to] the husband." So, in reference to meats from which, during the apostasy, men were to be commanded to abstain, the same apostle says (1 Tim. iv. 4, 5), "For every creature of God good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received wi



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thanksgiving, for it is *sanctified* by the word of God and prayer." Here the same word is applied to the *meats* that is applied to the *unbelieving husband or wife*; and the meaning of the term *sanctified* seems obviously, in both cases, to be, that the persons or things were now rendered *lawful or fit to be enjoyed*; which was not the case under the old economy.

### IX. *The Infants brought to Christ.*

Luke xviii. 15—17. "And they brought unto him also infants, *that he would touch them*; but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for *of such* is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, *Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.*"

Mark x. 13—16, is nearly verbatim the same, but with the additional information (ver. 16), that "he took them up in his arms, *put his hands upon them, and blessed them.*"

Mat. xix. 13. "Then were brought unto him little children, *that he should put his hands on them and pray,*" &c.

Here it will not be pretended that these children were brought to Christ for baptism; for the object of their being brought is particularly stated, viz., that "*he should put his hands on them and pray.*" In truth, Christian baptism was not yet instituted—the commission was not yet given.

The whole force of the argument, such as it is, lies in the expression, "*of such* is the kingdom of heaven." Now, this cannot mean, *literally*, that the kingdom of God *consists of such infants as were brought to Christ*; for, observe, it is not said, "the kingdom of God is constituted PARTLY of such, but *of such*." There is a great difference between the expression "*such are of the kingdom of God*," which is the sense put upon the words by Dr. Wardlaw, and "*of such* is the kingdom of God;" precisely the same difference that there would be between the statement that "*females constitute a part of the Christian Church*,"

and the statement that "the Christian Church *consists of females.*" This distinction has been greatly lost sight of in the consideration of this lovely incident (it has been completely lost sight of by Dr. Wardlaw, who reverses the words of Christ), and yet it, of itself, is sufficient to decide the case, viz. that it was not in the literal sense that Christ intended his language to be understood, because, in that sense, it would not have been true; for the kingdom of God does not consist of *children*, even on the Pedobaptist hypothesis.

In the *figurative* sense, however, it is *true* that "*of such*" as possess the docility and humility of children, in a greater or less degree, "*the kingdom of heaven*" is *constituted*. Hence, in one of the verses, Christ explains his meaning in these words:—"Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God **AS A LITTLE CHILD**,\* shall in no wise enter therein;" and in Mat. xviii. 2, "Except ye be converted and become **AS LITTLE CHILDREN**, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself *as this little child*, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one **SUCH** little child" [as thus humbles himself] "in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend" [or "cause to stumble," or "fall into sin," as the word means] "one of *these little ones* **THAT BELIEVE IN ME**, it would be better for him," &c. Observe here, that it was only "*a child*," that he called

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\* We are astonished at Dr. Wardlaw's gloss upon this clause. He says, quoting the passage, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child* (i. e. surely as a little child receives it), he shall in no case enter therein." That this is not the meaning will be obvious, by comparing the passage with Mat. xviii. 3, where the same phraseology occurs. "Except ye be converted and become *as little children*, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." It is plainly to the *disposition* of children, in both passages, that the reference is made, and not to any *mode of receiving* the kingdom of God exemplified by a child. The notion of such a thing is ridiculous.

unto him, and hence it could not have been to *it* that the Saviour referred at all in the *plural number*, but to such as, *believing in him*, humbled themselves as this "little child." In a similar manner, in the same chapter, he enjoins his disciples to be "harmless as doves;" in Luke x. 3, he says, "Behold I send you forth as lambs;" and in John xxi. 15, 16, the followers of Christ are actually styled "sheep" and "lambs," just as, in the above passage and others, they are styled "little children" and "babes."

But though it could be proved that children *as such* are members of the kingdom of heaven, understanding by the phrase the church universal, it would avail nothing in this argument; for the law of baptism is not, "Let him who may be reckoned, in some sense, a member of the church be baptised;" but Let him that "*believeth with all his heart*" be baptised; just as, in reference to the Lord's Supper, it is not said, "Let him that may be reckoned, in some sense, a member of the church, partake of it;" but "Let a man *examine himself*, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup."

Besides, if there were a shadow of force in the argument, it would prove that *all the children in the world* should be baptised; for it is to children, *as such*, and not to the children of believing parents, that the reference is made.

On the whole, we are just where we were at the outset of this inquiry—we have yet found no authority whatever for infant baptism.

#### X. *Identity of the Jewish and Christian Churches considered.*

An argument for infant baptism is sometimes drawn from—

Rom. xi. 16—18. "For if the root be holy so are the branches, and if some of the branches be broken off, and thou,

being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, boast not against the branches ; but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee."

The argument from this passage is, that the Old and New Testament churches are one, and that children, having been always a part of the Jewish church, ought to be considered as a part of the Christian church also.

Now, we altogether dissent from this argument ; for, even granting the premises, viz. that, in some sense, the Jewish and Christian churches are one, we altogether deny the legitimacy of the conclusion. The church on earth and the church in heaven are *one*, but it does not follow, that all who are admissible into the church on earth will, therefore, be admissible into the church in heaven. *A credible profession* of vital holiness, corroborated by an *apparently corresponding practice*, is all that is necessary for admission into the church on earth, but the *reality* is essential to admission into the church in heaven. On the other hand, *evidence of vital godliness* was not essential to membership in the Jewish church, in any period of its existence, from its commencement in Abraham, to its termination in the establishment of the Christian dispensation. Descent from Abraham, irrespective of piety, constituted a valid title to membership in the Jewish church ; but, under the new dispensation, "They which are *of faith*" being alone reckoned "the children of Abraham," and "heirs according to the promise," they and they *only* have a right to membership in the Christian church.

In reference to adults, Dr. Wardlaw contends as earnestly as we do (pp. 195—198), that the principle of connexion with the New Testament church is essentially different from the principle of connexion with the old. "The Jewish church (he says) was *national*, when the new dispensation was introduced it was no longer to be so. The wicked were to be shaken out of

it. It was not to consist of nations, **but of** in  
 of all nations, separated from the **world by** **t**  
 of God." Just so; and this completely, 1  
 branch, destroys the argument founded on the  
 identity of the Jewish and Christian churches  
 we proceed *at all* according to the Jewish pri-  
 connexion, let us give to it *its full extent of app*  
 and have national churches at once. **But** if we  
 admit of these, let us not apply the **old prin**  
 communion in a partial and inconsistent **way.**"  
 the Doctor's own general principle—it is also  
 and, in its application to the case in hand, it e  
 nullifies all argument for infant baptism, found  
 the connexion of children with the Jewish church  
 reference to the state of things in the patriarcha  
 can, in the smallest degree, affect this argument  
 can any argument for infant baptism be founded  
 similar identification of the church under the  
 Testament and patriarchal dispensations, unless it c  
 be proved, what will not be pretended, that the la  
 connexion was the same in the days of *Abraham*  
 Dr. Wardlaw has proved it to be under the new  
 dispensation.

The Doctor, in reply to Mr. M'Lean, who  
 urged that the same kind of reasoning that is b  
 noticed in support of infant baptism might be e  
 ployed, with equal plausibility, in support of the nota  
 that the kingdom of Christ is a worldly kingdom  
 says, "I have only to request the candid reader  
 consider the marked difference between the two case  
 and to put the question to his own mind, whether, if  
 the continuance of the pre-existing connexion between  
 children and parents had been inconsistent with the  
 spirituality of his kingdom, he who showed himself so  
 jealous of that spirituality, and set himself so decidedly  
 against the carnal views and expectations of the Jews  
 would not have acted in regard to it [carnal descent]  
 upon the same principle [on which he set himself]

of nations, against the Jewish expectations of a worldly kingdom], from the ~~us~~ and have avoided whatever was fitted to countenance ~~this case~~ and confirm erroneous conceptions." And so we main-  
 tain he did ; and, instead of a "marked *difference*,"  
 there is a marked *similarity* "between the two cases." How Dr. W. could have insinuated the reverse we cannot understand, but we are sure he is perfectly familiar with such passages as the following :—Mat. iii. 9, "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father." John viii. 39, "They an-  
 swered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham." Verse 44, "Ye are of your father the devil." John iii. 3, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Verse 6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again." Rom. ii. 28, "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh," &c. Chap. iii. 9, "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin." Verse 29, "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also." Acts x. 28, "And Peter said unto them [Cornelius and his friends], Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or to come unto one of another nation;" [this was the case under the old economy—mark the change] "but God hath showed me that I should not" [now when carnal distinctions are to be abolished] "call any man common or unclean." Verse 34, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons," &c. Verse 45, "And they of the circumcision were astonished" [the change was opposed to all their previous views and feelings], "because that on the Gen

it. It was not to consist of nations, but of individuals of all nations, separated from the world by the grace of God." Just so; and this completely, root and branch, destroys the argument founded on the alleged identity of the Jewish and Christian churches. "If we proceed *at all* according to the Jewish principle of connexion, let us give to it *its full extent of application*, and have national churches at once. But if we cannot admit of these, let us not apply the old principle of communion in a partial and inconsistent way." This is the Doctor's own general principle—it is also ours; and, in its application to the case in hand, it entirely nullifies all argument for infant baptism, founded on the connexion of children with the Jewish church. No reference to the state of things in the patriarchal age can, in the smallest degree, affect this argument; nor can any argument for infant baptism be founded on a similar identification of the church under the New Testament and patriarchal dispensations, unless it could be proved, what will not be pretended, that the law of connexion was the same in the days of Abraham, as Dr. Wardlaw has proved it to be under the new dispensation.

The Doctor, in reply to Mr. M'Lean, who had urged that the same kind of reasoning that is here noticed in support of infant baptism might be employed, with equal plausibility, in support of the notion that the kingdom of Christ is a worldly kingdom, says, "I have only to request the candid reader to consider the marked difference between the two cases, and to put the question to his own mind, whether, if the continuance of the pre-existing connexion between children and parents had been inconsistent with the spirituality of his kingdom, he who showed himself so jealous of that spirituality, and set himself so decidedly against the carnal views and expectations of the Jews, would not have acted in regard to it [carnal descent] the same principle [on which he set himself

against the Jewish expectations of a worldly kingdom], and have avoided whatever was fitted to countenance and confirm erroneous conceptions." And so we maintain he did ; and, instead of a "marked *difference*," there is a marked *similarity* "between the two cases." How Dr. W. could have insinuated the reverse we cannot understand, but we are sure he is perfectly familiar with such passages as the following :—Mat. iii. 9, "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father." John viii. 39, "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham." Verse 44, "Ye are of your father the devil." John iii. 3, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Verse 6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again." Rom. ii. 28, "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh," &c. Chap. iii. 9, "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin." Verse 29, "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also." Acts x. 28, "And Peter said unto them [Cornelius and his friends], Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or to come unto one of another nation;" [this was the case under the old economy—mark the change] "but God hath showed me that I should not" [now when carnal distinctions are to be abolished] "call any man common or unclean." Verse 34, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons," &c. Verse 45, "And they of the circumcision were astonished" [the change was opposed to all their previous views and feelings], "because that on the Gentile

was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. vii. 19, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God." Gal. v. 6, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." If these passages, and others of a similar import, be not levelled against the Jewish propensity to trust in that connexion with Abraham which entitled them to connexion with the Jewish church, no language can be so. And if they do not refer to an essentially different principle, as the principle of connexion with the New Testament church, how would it be possible to find terms sufficiently strong to mark the change? How Dr. W. could insinuate that he who "set himself so decidedly against the carnal views and expectations of the Jews" as to a worldly kingdom, did not set himself against their "carnal views" as to *fleshy descent from Abraham*, is to us a perfect mystery. But this leads us to consider more particularly,

#### XI. *The supposed connexion of children with parents as inheritors of spiritual promises.*

Acts ii. 37—39, "Men and brethren what shall we do? Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, EVEN AS MANY AS THE LORD OUR GOD SHALL CALL."

The first thing to be remarked here is, that the phrase "you and your children" is a Hebraism, by no means importing infant children, nor that the "children" were to enjoy the promise *in consequence* of connexion with their parents, or on any other footing than the parents themselves. The following are a few examples of similar phraseology:—Ezek. xxxvii. 25, "And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein *your fathers*

have dwelt; even they and *their children, and their CHILDREN'S CHILDREN*, for ever." Deut. xxx. 2, "Thou shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice, according to all that I command thee this day, *thou and thy children*, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." Psal. cxv. 14, "The Lord shall increase you more and more, *you and your children*." Psal. ciii. 17, "His righteousness is unto *children's children*." Deut. xxix. 29, "Those things which are revealed belong to *us and to our children* for ever, that *we may do all the words of this law*." Mat. xxvii. 25, "His blood be on *us and on our children*." As a key to this form of speech, see Acts xiii. 32, 33, "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the *promise which was made unto the fathers*, God hath fulfilled the same *UNTO US THEIR CHILDREN*." In all these passages the term "children" means simply posterity\* of any age, but almost exclusively *adult children*, able to act on their own responsibility. The same phraseology is used in other places where the blessing to parents and children is obviously *successive*, as in the case of the children of kings inheriting the throne of their fathers. Thus, Deut. xvii. 29, "To the end that he may prolong his days in *HIS KINGDOM, he and his children* in the midst of Israel." Psal. cxxxii. 12, "If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, *their children* shall also sit on *thy throne* for evermore." Observe, this

\* Many eminent Pedobaptists admit this to be the proper meaning of the word: thus—

*Dr. Hammond.*—"If any have made use of that very inconclusive argument (in support of infant baptism), I have nothing to say in defence of them. The word children there is merely the posterity of the Jews, not peculiarly their infant children." Works, vol. I, p. 490.

*Limborch.*—"By *teckna* the Apostle understands *not infants*, but *posterity*, in which signification the word occurs in many places in the New Testament. Whence it appears, that the argument which is very commonly taken from this passage for the baptism of infants is of no force, and good for nothing."—*Com. in Loco.*

promise was to the children of David, and *their children*; but the latter could not, in the ordinary course of events, enjoy the promise till the death or abdication of the former, *and only on the same terms too* (see 2 Chron. xii. 7). No argument, therefore, can be built upon the phrase "you and your children." But,

2. Though the term "children" did not so generally mean *posterity*, the next clause in the passage entirely precludes the sense that is required to be of any use to our Pedobaptist friends. "The promise is to *you* and to *your children*, and to *all that are afar off*." Here is a plain and simple *enumeration* of the parties to whom the promise (whatever that promise is) belongs, and there is no more connexion between the *second* member of the enumeration and the first, than there is between the *third* and the first. "The promise is to *you*, and to *all that are afar off*," is precisely the same in connexion as "The promise is to *you* and to *your children*," so that any conclusion that may be drawn in the one case must be equally legitimate in the other.

3. The promise is limited, as it respects each class in the enumeration, by the concluding clause, "*even as many as the Lord our God shall call*." Thus, "to as many among you—to as many among your children, and as many among them that are afar off, *as the Lord our God shall call*." Consequently, it cannot, by any possible construction, be made to bear the sense that Pedobaptism requires.

4. There is no likelihood that there ever would have been any difference of opinion as to the promise intended, if that difference had not been required for the support of the Pedobaptist hypothesis. "Then said Peter unto them, Repent, and be baptised every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and"—what then?—"ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as

many as the Lord our God shall call." Where is that promise recorded? Ver. 16, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel (chap. ii. 28), And it shall come to pass afterward, *that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,*" &c. Ver. 29, "And upon the *servants and handmaids* in those days will *I pour out my Spirit,*" &c. Ver. 32, "For in Mount Zion and Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and *in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.*" Here the correspondence of all the parts is complete—

### 1. THE PROMISE.

Ver. 38, "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Joel ii. 28, "I will pour out my Spirit."

### 2. THE PARTIES.

Ver. 39, "To you and to your children, and to all that are afar off."

Joel ii. 29, "Upon all flesh—your sons—your daughters—your old men—your young men—the servants—the handmaids."

### 3. THE LIMITATION.

Ver. 39, "Even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Joel ii. 32, "—the remnant whom the Lord shall call."

Surely, after a reference so very pointed and complete to the prophecy of Joel as is here made, to seek for another, and that other having no direct relation to the subject spoken of, viz. the Spirit's influence, is not to seek information from Scripture, but to bend it to our own wishes. This passage seems to have no more reference to the promise made to Abraham than to the promise made to our first parents after the fall, the only point of agreement being the similarity of the phrase "*you and your children*" (omitting the last clause of the sentence), in the one passage, to the phrase "*thee and thy seed*" in the other; but, in this respect, the reference might as well be made to Numb. xvii: 19 "All the heave offerings of the holy things wh'

the children of Israel offer unto the Lord I have given to thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever; it is a covenant of salt for ever before the Lord *unto thee and to thy seed after thee.*" The "children of faith," under the Gospel, have no more title to the peculiar blessings that belonged to the father of the faithful, and his natural seed, than the "royal priesthood," under the Gospel, have to the peculiar blessings of Aaron and his sons. But this leads us, in the last place, having failed to find the least authority for infant baptism in any of the passages or arguments that have hitherto come before us, now to consider,

*XII. The Abrahamic Covenant and the rite that belonged to it.*

This covenant is recorded in

Gen. xvii. 3. "And God talked with him [Abraham], saying, As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shall keep my covenant, therefore, thou and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee: every man child among you shall be circumcised, and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations; he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised."

This covenant was renewed to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 2  
Jacob, chap. xxviii. 18—to their descendants on

several occasions, as at Sinai, Lev. xxvi. 9, "I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you." Ver. 42, "And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." Ver. 42, "Then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember." And again, at the end of their journeyings in the wilderness—Deut. xxix. 10, "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water; that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the *Lord thy God*, and into his oath which the *Lord thy God* maketh with thee this day. That he may establish thee to-day for *a people unto himself*, and that he may be *unto thee a God*, AS HE HATH SAID UNTO THEE, AND AS HE HATH SWORN UNTO THY FATHERS, TO ABRAHAM, TO ISAAC, AND TO JACOB."

This covenant was renewed at various subsequent periods of the Jewish history; and, all along, God acknowledges himself the God of the Jews, even in the times of their greatest degeneracy. See the 78th Psalm throughout, a great part of the Book of Jeremiah, the 20th chapter of Ezekiel, and many parallel passages.

Let us now analyze this covenant, that we may see whether infant baptism can be founded upon it, since we have been unable to discover any authority for it elsewhere.

In doing so, let us bear in mind the clear principle of Dr. Wardlaw (p. 198), that if we adopt this covenant, and the law regarding the rite appended to it, as our rule, we are bound to apply the rule as we find it, unless special authority can be produced for adopting some parts, and rejecting others. We again quote †

words:—"If we are to proceed *at all* according to Jewish principles, let us give them their *full extent of application*, and have national churches at once. But, if we cannot admit of this, in a 'kingdom which is not of this world,' let us NOT APPLY THE OLD PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNION, IN A PARTIAL AND INCONSISTENT WAY, TO THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH." How far our brethren act on this just principle, as it respects this covenant, the sequel will show.

1. The first promise of the covenant was, that Abraham was to be "a father of many nations"—that he was to be "exceeding fruitful," and that "kings should could come out of him."

2. That God was to "establish his covenant between him and Abraham, and his seed after him, *in their generations*, for an everlasting covenant" [i. e. as Scott explains it, unalterable during the state of things that was then established], "to be a God to him and to his seed after him."

3. That God was to give to Abraham, and his seed after him, the land wherein he was a stranger, "*all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession.*"

On the other hand, the appointed token of the covenant was,

"Every man child among you shall be circumcised; he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child *in your generations*, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, *which is not of thy seed*; he that is *born in thy house*, and he that is *bought with thy money*, **MUST NEEDS BE CIRCUMCISED.**"

In accordance with the typical character of the Jewish people themselves, and all that was peculiar to them and their worship, THIS COVENANT had in it a literal and a spiritual meaning—a literal meaning in reference to the Jews as a people, and a spiritual meaning in reference to all the *true Israel of God*, in every subsequent age of the world. In the one sense, Abra-

ham was the *father of the Jews only*—in the other, he was the *father of believers only*. *In the literal sense*, no believer unconnected with the Jewish people, not even Melchizedec himself, had any interest in this covenant—*in the spiritual sense*, no unbelieving Jew had any part or lot in the matter. *In the literal sense*, Christ said to the Jews, “I know that ye are Abraham’s seed—in the *spiritual sense*, he said “*If ye were* the children of Abraham, ye would do the works of Abraham.” “Ye are (says he) of your father the devil, and the works of your father ye will do.” In the *literal sense*, Peter, addressing the *murderers of Christ*, says, “Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers.”—in the *spiritual sense*, Paul says, “they are not all Israel who are of *Israel*.” “If ye be of faith, then are ye *Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise*.” This distinction is constantly recognised throughout the Scriptures, and a steady attention to it would at once dissipate much of that mystification that surrounds the argument from the *Abrahamic covenant*.

The same distinction exists as to the **BLESSINGS** of the covenant. Thus the numerous seed promised to Abraham were representative of that multitude which no man can number, who shall be saved by Him who is the covenant head of his people, of every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue, Rev. vii. 9. The relation that existed between God and the Jews, *as a people*, was representative of that more intimate relation that has existed between God and believers in all ages, John xx. 17. And Canaan, the earthly inheritance of the Jews, was representative of the heavenly Canaan—the “inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and fadeth not away.” 1 Pet. i. 4. Hence, it is said of the patriarchs, that, although they did not inherit the promise *literally*, they looked forward to that of which it was representative, for they “desired a better country, that is, a heavenly; w<sup>t</sup>

fore God was not ashamed to be called their God" [in the highest sense], "for he had prepared for them a city."

In the same manner, the **TOKEN** of the covenant had a *literal* and a *spiritual* signification, as we have already incidentally noticed. In its *literal sense*, it was confined to the seed of Abraham and those who became incorporated with the Jewish people, *without respect to spiritual character*—"EVERY MAN CHILD AMONG YOU SHALL BE CIRCUMCISED." In its *spiritual sense*, "circumcision was that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." Hence, we read of the Jews, in their rebellions, being uncircumcised in their hearts; and hence, when God promises his blessing, it is sometimes in such terms as the following—"The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart;" and, hence, when they are called to reform their ways, the command is, "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord," though every one of them had, as Jews, been literally circumcised already. Hence also, in the *literal sense*, the Jewish people, were termed *the circumcision*; but, in the *spiritual sense*, Paul says, "We [believers] are *the circumcision*, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

We now come to the inquiry, "Does the covenant furnish any authority for infant baptism? or does the law of circumcision involve it? In both cases we unhesitatingly answer, No.

I. As to the covenant, With whom was it made? With *Abraham*, either (1), as the father of a numerous seed *literally*; or (2), as the father of a numerous seed *spiritually*. It does not follow, however, that though the covenant was made with him and his seed *as connected with him*, the blessings of this covenant, as a whole, belonged to either the *literal* or *spiritual seed* of Abraham. For instance, no Jew "*outwardly*," nor any Jew "*inwardly*," was assured, in either sense, of

being "*a father of many nations*," or of having the Abrahamic covenant confirmed to "*him and his seed after him*," for many of them had *no seed*. Of those who had seed *literally*, it was by no means secured that "*kings*" should descend from them; nor was there any corresponding promise to the *spiritual seed*. To none of them and their seed *literally*, could *all the land of Canaan* belong, for the land was divided among the tribes of Israel; and to the *spiritual seed* not a foot of it belonged *because of their being believers*. This is a vital point in the controversy, and ought to be very maturely considered; for, though it could be proved that any *spiritual* covenant-relation existed between Abraham and his seed (which is contrary both to the doctrine of Scripture and fact), it would not follow that the same covenant-relation existed between every descendant of Abraham also and his seed; nor would it follow that the same covenant-relation must exist between *believers* and their seed, unless they were all constituted *fathers of the faithful*, in the same manner that Abraham was, which involves a contradiction.

But it is common to select one clause from the covenant, viz. "*I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee*," and, stopping even in the middle of the sentence, leaving out the important words, "*in their generations*," — then, giving a spiritual meaning to the words, "*I will be a God to thee*," &c., to argue that the seed of believers are interested with them in the covenant of grace! It is scarcely possible to conceive of an argument more arbitrary and inconclusive than this. The following fallacies are involved in it:—

(1.) That the peculiar promises made to *Abraham and his seed* belong to *believers and their seed*. This we have just shown to be a groundless notion, and we need not dwell upon it.

(2.) That, as the covenant had reference not merely to Abraham and his *immediate offspring*, but "*to him, and his seed after him, in their generations*," *all th-*

*descendants of every believer*, to the end of time, ought to be baptised !

(3.) That the phrase, "*I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed,*" had, as it respected the Jewish nation, *as such*, the same meaning that it has in such passages as Heb. xi. 16, "But now they desire a better country, that is, an *heavenly*, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called *their God*, for he hath prepared for them a city." This is quite a mistaken notion, for it is admitted on all hands, that *God* was the *God* of the Jews *as a people*, in a sense altogether peculiar, and only *typical* of that in which he is the *God* of the believer. He was, in this sense, as we have already noticed, the *God* of the Israelites during every period of their history. Moses, identifying with their descendants those whose carcases fell in the wilderness because of their rebellion and unbelief, addresses them thus as a people (Deut. i. 21, 26), "And I said, Behold the Lord *thy God* hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the *Lord God of thy fathers* hath said unto thee; notwithstanding ye would not go up, but *rebelled* against the commandment of the *Lord your God*." Ver. 29, "Then I said unto you, Dread not," &c. Ver. 32, "Yet in this thing *ye did not believe the Lord your God*," &c. Ver. 34, "And the Lord heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying, Surely there shall *not one of these men of this evil generation* see that good land which I sware to give unto your fathers." In like manner, Joshua, before his death, addressing God's *peculiar people*, said (Josh. xxiii. 16), "When ye have transgressed the *covenant of your God*, which he commanded you, and have gone and *served other gods*, and bowed yourselves to them, then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and ye shall *perish quickly, from off the good land which he hath given unto you*. So also Jeremiah (chap. xlvi. 20), "Ye dissembled in your hearts when ye sent me unto the Lord *your God*,

saying, Pray for us unto the *Lord our God*," &c. Ver. 21, "Ye have not obeyed the voice of the Lord *your God*, nor any thing for the which he hath sent me unto you. Now, therefore, know certainly that *ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire to go and to sojourn.*" Chap. xliv. 2, "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the *God of Israel*; Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein, because of their wickedness that they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they *went to burn incense, and to serve other gods* whom they knew not, neither they, ye, nor your fathers." Even to those wicked Jews who "*killed the Prince of Life*," Peter says (Acts iii. 25), "*Ye are the children of THE COVENANT WHICH GOD MADE WITH OUR FATHERS*, saying *UNTO ABRAHAM*, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." And of the same unbelieving Jews Paul says (Rom. ix. 2—4), "*I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart; for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, WHO ARE ISRAELITES*; to whom *pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and THE COVENANTS, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and THE PROMISES.*" How vain is it, then, to rest a hypothesis of *spiritual relationship* between parents and children on an expression that was applied to rebels, nay, idolaters, doomed to perish for their unbelief—an expression that does not *necessarily* involve any more connexion than that external relationship that existed between God and the Jews through every period of their history, from the days of Abraham, to the day that they were cast off because of their rejection of the Messiah.

II. As to the token of the covenant—*circumcision*—To whom was it administered? And how far do ou

brethren who contend for infant baptism, on the ground of circumcision, follow out their own principle?

(1.) Abraham himself was circumcised—*so the believer who is converted from heathenism is baptised.*

(2.) Abraham's male children were circumcised—*so the believer's male children are baptised.*

Thus far the analogy is carried, but here most arbitrarily the analogy ceases. And now for the deviations from the rule of circumcision:—

(1.) The believer's *female* offspring are baptised, though the law of circumcision applies to *males only*. In reply to this, it is remarked, that “in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female.” This is true; but it is also true, that *in Christ Jesus* “he is not a Jew who is one outwardly;” for, “we are all the children of God *by faith in Christ Jesus.*” Besides, in the spiritual sense, there was “neither male nor female” under the old economy, more than under the new. The holy women of old were as much members of the spiritual church as the holy men; so that the reason assigned for deviating from the rule of circumcision will not hold. Here the rule is violated by admitting more to baptism than the law of circumcision warrants, but next the rule is violated by excluding several classes which that law required to be circumcised; for,

(2.) All the *adult* males in the believer's family would require, according to this law, to be baptised along with himself, whatever was their religious character. Ishmael, who was the son of the bond-woman, and not interested with Isaac in the covenant (Gen. xxi. 10), was circumcised as well as he.

(3.) All the men *born in the believer's house* would require to be baptised, when he embraces the faith of the Gospel, for all the men born in Abraham's house were circumcised.

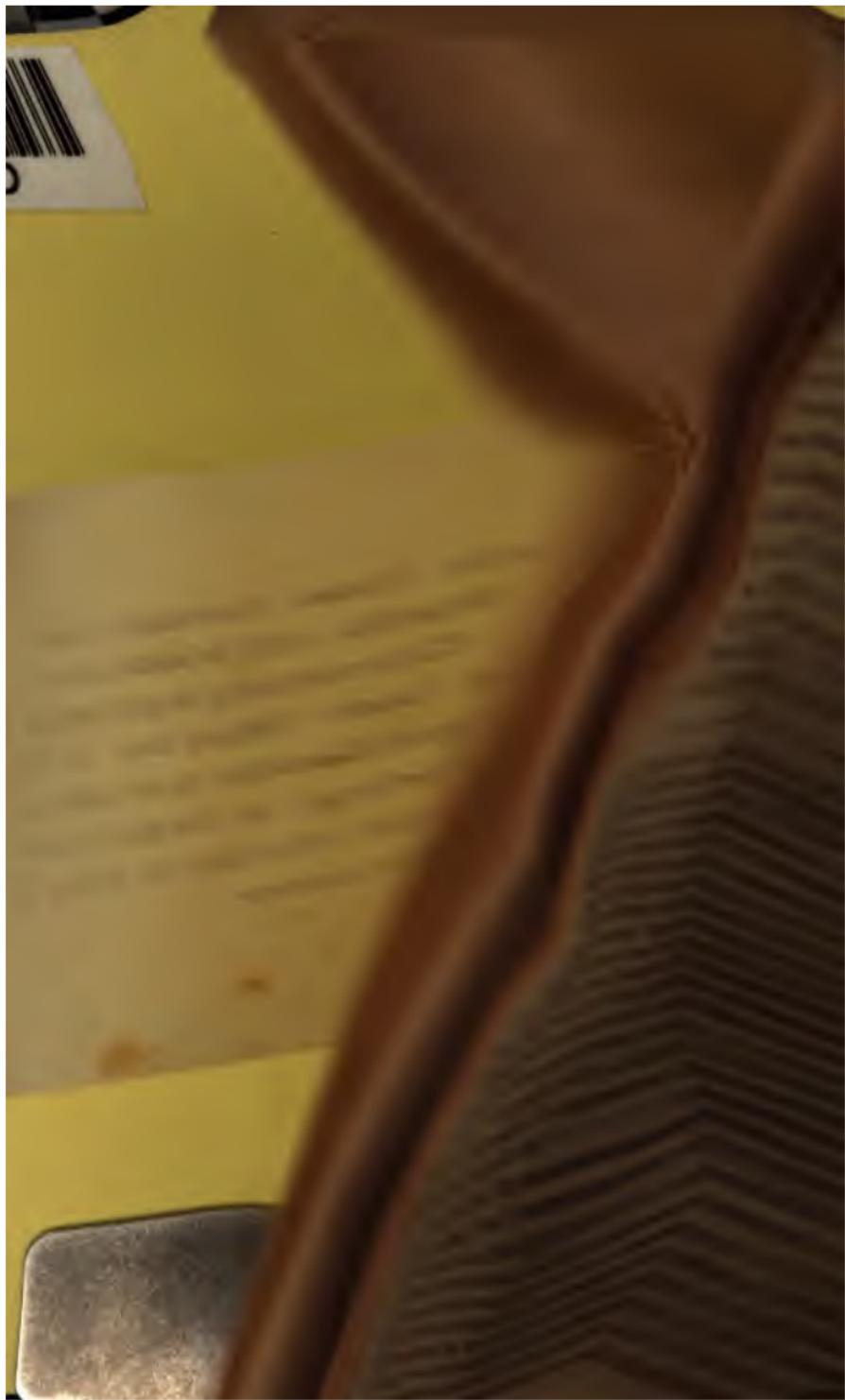
(4.) All his domestics, corresponding to those in Abraham's house, who were bought with money “must needs be baptised with him, as soon as he embraces

the truth ; for he that was bought with Abraham's money "must needs be circumcised."

(5.) He that refuses to be baptised in the house of the believer must be "cut off from his people," for this was the law of circumcision (verse 14). Thus, while the law of circumcision is pleaded for as the law of Christian baptism, it is violated in almost every particular !

To all this it is replied, that the state of things is changed now—that it is only necessary now to baptise the **INFANTS** of believers, extending the rite to *females* as well as *males*. But where is the law for this *abridgement* on the one hand, and this *extension* on the other ? Not in the Bible ; and Dr. Wardlaw has taught us that, "if we are to proceed **AT ALL** according to Jewish principles, we ought to give them their full extent of application. But if we cannot admit of these in a kingdom so different from the Jewish, we ought not to apply the old principles *in a partial and inconsistent way* to the New Testament church." They who urge the law of circumcision as their warrant for infant baptism, are bound to follow it out, but *it cannot be followed out* without violating some of the most prominent principles of the New Testament ;—therefore, as proving too much, it proves *nothing*.

We have now examined all the passages of any moment that we know of, as adduced to prove infant baptism ; but not one of them, so far as we can perceive, affords the slightest warrant for the practice ; and among them all there seem to us to be none more inconclusive than those that refer to the Abrahamic covenant, of which circumcision was the appointed token ; for the practice of Pedobaptists does not accord fully with the law of circumcision *in any one point*, but the one in which the believer *himself* is baptised, and for that there is no occasion to go to the old economy to find authority. Our firm and sett'





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conviction, therefore, is, that infant baptism has no foundation in Scripture.

### XIII. *Antiquity of Infant Baptism.*

After all, it may be said, although there seems to be no clear Scriptural warrant for infant baptism, it is somewhat unaccountable how it could have obtained a footing so early as it did, if it had not been of divine origin. On this point we shall quote an important passage from Mr. Gibbs. "All the authentic ecclesiastical remains of the first ages (says he) support the testimony of Mosheim and Dr. Campbell, in proving not only the reality, but the early rise and vast extent of episcopal usurpation. The influence of the spirit of innovation (says he), which led the ministers of Christ to assume the dignities of the Levitical priesthood, gradually spread through the whole church, till the nature and design of the Gospel were concealed; and numerous ceremonies were introduced, which gave to the Christian religion the pompous splendour of the Jewish worship. Lest these things should be supposed to be unauthorised by the New Testament, they were defended under the imposing title of *apostolical traditions*. During the second century, a variety of doctrines and ceremonies were introduced into the Christian worship by certain of the fathers, who claimed a personal acquaintance with the apostles, or with those who had been their intimate associates. Their opinions were received as *simple traditions*. In process of time, when it became uncertain with whom such things had originated, they passed under the name of *ancient and secret traditions*. But it was not until the close of the fourth century that they received the imposing title of *apostolical traditions*.

"Tertullian mentions tradition as the authority upon which many rites were performed in his day (A. D. 200). 'Now (says he), to begin with baptism. When we come to the water, we do there, under the

hand of the pastor, make a profession that we renounce the devil, and his pomps, and his angels. Then we are plunged three times in the water, and we answer some few words more than those which the Saviour in the Gospel has enjoined. When we are taken out of the water, we taste a mixture of milk and honey, and from that time we abstain a week from bathing ourselves, which *otherwise we use every day*. The sacrament of the eucharist we receive in our assemblies before day. We give oblations every day for the dead on the day of their martyrdom. We account it an unfit thing to keep fasts on the Lord's day, or to kneel at our prayers on that day. The same liberty we take all the time from Easter to Pentecost. We are troubled at it if any of our bread or wine fall to the ground. At every setting out or entering on business, whenever we come in or go out from any place, when we dress for a journey or go into a bath, when we go to eat meat, when the candles are brought in, when we lie down or sit down, and whatever business we have, we make the sign of the cross on our foreheads. If you search the Scriptures for any command for these and *such like usages, you shall find none*. TRADITION will be urged to you as the ground for them; *custom* as the confirmers of them; and our religion teaches us to observe them.'

"The following are his reasons for the baptismal ceremonies:—'The flesh is washed that the soul may be unspotted; the flesh is anointed that the soul may be consecrated; the flesh is signed (with the sign of the cross) that the soul may be fortified.' All this Basil and Austin defended in the fourth century as *apostolical tradition*.

"The consecration of baptismal water is mentioned by Tertullian and Cyprian. In the following age this was considered as *apostolical tradition*.

"The anointing of the baptised with oil is thus noticed by Tertullian:—'When we come out of the

laver, we are anointed with a *blessed ointment*, according to the *ancient practice*, by which men used to be anointed for the priest's office out of a horn.' This practice was confirmed by the council of Laodicea.

"*Imposition of hands, renunciations, and exorcisms, were all considered as essential parts of baptism, and were defended on the ground of apostolical tradition.*

"In addition to these, there were prayers for the dead, bowing to the east, the superstitious observance of times and seasons, all defended as **ANCIENT AND UNIVERSAL** rites of the church, founded upon *apostolical tradition*.

"It is among these customs, let it be remembered, that we first meet with infant baptism, and its appropriate appendage—*infant communion*."

But let us now hear their views of baptism itself. Irenæus says, "Christ gave his disciples the power of *regenerating to God*, when he sent them to baptise." Clemens Alexandrinus says, "Being immersed, we are *illuminated*," &c. "Neither do I deny (says Tertullian) that a divine benefit (that is, the blotting out of sins) *is sure* to those who are about to enter the water." Again, "For all waters, by an ancient prerogative, become a sacrament of sanctification through prayer; for the Spirit immediately comes from heaven and rests upon the waters, sanctifying them by himself, and so, being sanctified, they imbibe the power of sanctifying; whereas it is ordained that *no one can be saved without baptism*, by that weighty declaration of our Lord, 'Except a man be born again of water, &c. he has no life.'" Cyprian has much to the same effect. Gregory Nazianzen declares that "they who die unbaptised, without their own fault, go neither to heaven nor hell, but, *if they have lived piously*, to a middle place." Chrysostom says, "It is impossible to be saved without baptism. If an infant die without

it through the negligence of the presbyter, woe to that presbyter; but if through the negligence of the parents, woe to the parents of that infant!" And, again, " If sudden death seize us (which God forbid) without baptism, though we have a thousand good qualities, there is nothing to be expected but hell!" Austin is, if possible, stronger. *See Wall's Inf. Bapt., Part II., c. 6 and 9.*

Such is a specimen of the practices and opinions of those fathers respecting whom one of the leading Pedobaptist writers says, " It cannot be doubted that those who lived so near the apostles must have known their practice and practised accordingly"! Why not adopt all their principles then? Truly, with such extravagant notions of the salutary effect of baptism, it is little to be wondered at, that the early Christians soon began to administer the ordinance to infants, as a simple expedient for saving them, in the event of early death, and producing in them a fitness for heaven.

And now, to the question " How could the practice at first have been introduced, if it was not an apostolical practice?" we reply, by asking, How was infant *communion* introduced? How was *trine* immersion introduced? How were unction, exorcisms, and renunciations introduced? How were prayers for the dead, and bowing to the east introduced? It is much more incredible that all these and many more superstitious observances should have been introduced without notice, than that infant baptism should; for we find a very strong reason for the introduction of it, that does not exist in reference to many of the other observances, viz. that which arises from the extravagant views that the fathers entertained respecting the saving efficacy of baptism;\* yet in vain

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\* Even in the days of Justin Martyr, who lived in the century before Tertullian, and on the very border of the apostolic age, t'

at a somewhat earlier date than can be satisfactorily proved), viz. the unfounded notion of many of the early Christians, that the water of baptism possessed the power of regenerating the soul and cleansing it from sin. Pelagius, in the next century, asks, in repelling the slander that had been raised against him that he denied the baptism of infants, "Who can be so impious as to hinder infants from being baptised, *and born again in Christ*—who can be so impious as to refuse to an infant, of whatever age, *the common redemption of mankind?*" Pelagius thus holding the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, *along with infant baptism*, Austin urges the baptism of infants as an argument against him for denying original sin; and Dr. Wardlaw quotes with approbation Lathrop's absurd remark that "Pelagius, though greatly puzzled with the argument, yet never pretends that infant baptism was an unscriptural innovation or a partial usage of the church; which, had it been true, a man of his extensive acquaintance with the world must have known—and, had he known it, he doubtless would have said it—when he found himself embarrassed with the argument." Now, this we conceive to be very shallow reasoning. Dr. W. and Lathrop forget that Pelagius was as strenuous a supporter as Austin was of infant baptism! How preposterous, then, is it to suppose that, in order to get rid of a difficulty, he would argue against himself! As well might it be contended (as Dr. Pusey doubtless would contend) that, "if the doctrine of *baptismal regeneration* had been an unscriptural innovation, and a doctrine partially espoused by the church," a man of Austin's "acquaintance with the world must have known it, and doubtless would have said it" if he had been pressed with any sentiment inconsistent with it which he avowed! As well might Dr. Chalmers be expected to denounce church and state connexion when pleading against Dr. "ook for the independence of the church!"

The inference drawn by Lathrop, and quoted by Dr. Wardlaw, that infant baptism must have been "universally practised" in the days of Austin, is completely at variance with the history of those times. The Western Church, it is true, practised it generally along with *infant communion* and many absurd rites; but "in the Eastern churches (Jerome declares) that adults only were baptised," and multitudes besides entirely rejected infant baptism. For instance, it is affirmed in the history of the Donatists, whose ministers, at a great conference held at Carthage, were nearly equal in number to those of the Catholics, that they "refused to baptise children," and Austin, being requested by them to state "what good baptism did to infants," replied, "As to that matter, it is piously and truly believed that the faith of those by whom the child is presented, or offered to be consecrated, profits the child." When pressed by them for authority for infant baptism, he replied, "Do you (Donatists) ask for Divine authority in this matter? though that which the whole Church [*i. e.* the whole Catholic Church] practises is very reasonably believed to be no other than a thing delivered by the apostles, yet we may take a true estimate how much the sacrament of baptism does profit infants, by *the circumcision which God's former people received*!"

Four years after this, Austin called a council of ninety-two ministers at Mela, over which he himself presided, and the following is the manifesto which they issued:—"It is OUR WILL that all who affirm that young children receive everlasting life, although they be not by the sacrament of grace [or baptism] RENEWED, and who will not that new-born children be baptised TO THE TAKING AWAY ORIGINAL SIN, shall be anathematised"! Having attained eminence in the church, and the support of his brethren to enforce the doctrine of *infant salvation by baptism*, another assembly of divines was convened the same year at Carthage,

and the following is the decree that they issued :—  
 “ *WE WILL that whoever denies that little children by baptism are freed from perdition and eternally saved, SHALL BE ACCURSED !* ”—Observe the form of these decrees—“ *WE WILL,* ” &c.

During this age also, and for ages before and after, there was another numerous sect that declined communion with the Catholic Church, because of its corruptions. They were latterly called Paterines, because of their great sufferings, and are said to have been very strict in their discipline. “ They objected (says Robinson) vehemently against the baptism of infants, and condemned it as an error.” Whether the Paterines, or the Donatists, during any period of their history, **AS BODIES**, objected to infant baptism, does not seem very clear, but the numbers among them who did so must have been great to warrant the accounts that are given of them. But, besides these large sects, great numbers of whom, at least, took their stand against infant baptism and other growing corruptions of the Catholic Church, there were many of the Catholics themselves who did not practise it. We have quoted (p. 64) a few names of men of note among them, who, although born of Christian parents, were not baptised till they professed the faith themselves. Den gives the names of more; and Dr. Wall, the great apologist for infant baptism, makes the following remark on this circumstance :—“ The persons mentioned by Antipedobaptists as not baptised in infancy, are *so many and such noted persons* that, if the matter of fact be true ” [and there is the same evidence for its truth that there is for common historical facts, nay, as being opposed to the views of the dominant party, the evidence is much stronger] “ it is an argument that leaving children unbaptised was *no unusual but a frequent and ordinary thing*. For, it is obvious, to conclude that, if we can, in so remote an age, trace the practice of so many that did this, it is probable that a

great many more, of whose birth and baptism we do not read, *did the like*. This, I own, (says he) that it seems to me the *argument of the greatest weight of any that is brought on the Antipedobaptist side* in this dispute about antiquity." Yet, in the face of all such facts, Dr. Wardlaw gives currency to the superlatively silly inference of Lathrop, that because Pelagius did not argue against *his own practice* of infant baptism, it had been practised universally! Again, we must state our conviction that our excellent friend (Dr. W.) has not examined this subject thoroughly, else he could not have given, either in his own words or in the words of another, representations *in the form of inference*, so contrary to the *facts of history*. He says, very *naively*, respecting Tertullian, "He not only advised the delay of baptism in the case of infants, but also in the case of unmarried persons. Will our baptist brethren admit the inference as to the latter, which they draw so complacently as to the former?" We answer, most distinctly, Yes! Our inference is *not*, that *because Tertullian opposed the baptism of minors, therefore infant baptism is unwarrantable*. As *authorities*, we pay very little deference indeed, to either the opinions or practices of the Fathers; for, as we have noticed already, we know that the mystery of iniquity had begun to work in the apostolic age itself, and hence our appeal, as to *authority*, ends with the New Testament. But our inference is, that Tertullian's opposition to minor baptism, and his "advice to delay" in the case of *unmarried* persons are in entire accordance with the supposition that infant baptism was only then *beginning* to be agitated. We appeal to Dr. Wardlaw's candour, whether a recommendation to the people of this country "*to delay their baptism till they were married*" would not be utterly preposterous. If infant baptism had been as prevalent in the days of Tertullian as it is with us, the people would have supposed Tertullian mad to give such an advice, when, in gener

they would have had no more control over their baptism than they had over the winds of heaven. “*Delay* our baptism,” they must have said, “*Delay* our baptism! What can the man mean when he knows that we were baptised in infancy?” Dr. Wardlaw’s inference, that Tertullian’s advice to *delay* baptism till marriage is proof of the prevalence of infant baptism, is one of the most extraordinary instances of the perverting influence of prejudice that we have met with. Notwithstanding the Doctor’s testify remark (page 146), we here introduce the testimony of

*Curcellæus* (a learned divine of Geneva, and professor of divinity), who says, “The baptism of infants, in the first two centuries after Christ, was altogether unknown, but in the third and fourth centuries was allowed by some few. In the fifth, and following ages, it was generally received; and, therefore, says he, we observe this rite, indeed, as an ancient custom, but not as an apostolical tradition. There appears not the least footstep of it for the first two centuries.”\*

*Venema* says, “I conclude that Pedobaptism cannot be plainly proved to have been practised before the time of Tertullian. There were persons in his age who deemed that their infants might be baptised, *especially when they were afraid of their dying without baptism*, but Tertullian opposed it, and, by so doing, intimates that Pedobaptism *began to prevail*.”

“The fathers of the first four ages (says Orchard), though they give great numbers of histories of the baptism of adults, do not record one instance of the baptism of a child among the Eastern churches till the fourth century, when Galetes, the dying son of the

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\* It is said that, in Africa, where infant baptism seems to have originated, “a country minister, named Fidus, wrote a letter to Cyprian in 257, to ascertain how soon after birth children might be baptised; but the existence of such a letter has been called in question; and Jortin admits that some statements of Cyprian are not to be credited; and particularly, since many of the fathers of this age contradict themselves and each other.” But, even admitting the story to have been true, such an inquiry proves “that the subject was novel, and the practice unestablished; for Cyprian could not answer the letter, but called together, in a private way,

emperor Valens, was baptised by order of a monarch who swore he would not be contradicted." For this purpose, he sent for Basil, Bishop of Cesarea, but, from Fox's account, it appears he did not baptise the child. The rite was administered by an Arian bishop. The former speaks of baptism thus: "One must believe first, and then be sealed with baptism." "Faith must needs precede baptism." "None is to be baptised but the catechumen, and those who are duly instructed in the faith." But it may be objected that these remarks apply only to adult converts, and that infants might have been baptised notwithstanding such remarks;—"might have been"! This proves nothing. It must be demonstrated that infants generally were

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the brethren in the vicinity to the number of sixty-six, and to them he submitted the business." Now, surely the man must have a fair share of credulity who can believe that infant baptism had been practised for more than two hundred years, and yet, that it required a council to decide how soon an infant might be baptised! The characters of these pastors, moreover, were not such as to command much respect. Cyprian himself describes them as very licentious. "They were not only neglectful of their flocks, but entirely deserted them; covetous, fraudulent, and usurious, they travelled through distant provinces in quest of pleasure and gain." Such is the character given by Cyprian of the *men*, and what is the nature of their *decision*? "The assembly made no reference to any command, they alluded to no example going before;" the case was altogether a novel one, and the decision was an *agreement* of their own, for which they assign their reasons as follow: "Agreed, that the grace of God [baptism] should be withheld from no son of man"! [there is no distinction here between the children of believers and unbelievers], "a child might be kissed with the kiss of Christian charity as a brother, so soon as born.—Elisha prayed to God, and stretched himself on the infant"!—[what an argument for infant baptism!]"—"the eighth day was observed in the Jewish circumcision, which was a type going before. If sinners can have baptism, how much sooner infants, who, being newly born, have no sin, save being descended from Adam. This, therefore, dear brother, was our opinion in the assembly, that it is not for us to hinder any person from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful and kind and affectionate to all. Which rule, as it holds for all, so we think it more especially to be observed in reference to infants"!—Such are the grounds on record of "the opinions" of this African council of which so very much has been said. "Baptism" is termed "the grace of God"—it ought to be "withheld from

*baptised* before such an objection can have a particle of force. But, on the other hand, Basil, in urging his hearers to attend to the duty of baptism, says, "Do you demur, and loiter, and put off baptism, when you have been, *from a child*, catechised in the word; are you not acquainted with the truth?" Even Dr. Wall, the historian of infant baptism, candidly remarks on these words of Basil, that "Part of Basil's auditory, at this time, were such as had been from their childhood instructed in the Christian religion, and consequently, in all probability, born of Christian parents *and yet not baptised*." Dr. Field observes, on the histories of the fathers, that "very many who were born of Christian parents, in the fourth and fifth centuries, *DELAYED their baptism for a long time*, insomuch

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no son of man;" and as "the rule holds *for all*," it holds "*more especially* for infants;" why? because "if sinners can have baptism, much sooner infants, who have no sin, save being descended from Adam." Moreover, "the Jews circumcised their children on the eighth day;" and, to crown all, "Elisha prayed to God, and stretched himself on the infant!" We cannot believe that any intelligent man (especially such a man as Dr. Wardlaw, who quotes Lathrop's bombastic and garbled account of the affair) could ever have referred to such an authority, but in consequence of his not having examined the circumstances. Any one, however, who appeals to it must take it *as a whole*, and then *all children* must be baptised, and adults too, if they please, whatever their characters as sinners may happen to be. It ought to be mentioned, in concluding this note, that so far from the practice of Pedobaptism prevailing immediately after the opinion of these sixty-six corrupt bishops was so very singularly given, complaints were common *one hundred years after*, that the tender mothers could not be prevailed upon to put their children into the baptismal water.—See *Wall's Hist. Bap.*, p. 111.

We cannot help noticing, also, the erroneous representation given by Lathrop, and quoted by Dr. Wardlaw, viz., that there was no question before this council as to the validity of infant baptism, but as to the precise day on which the rite ought to be administered. Now, we are sure Dr. Wardlaw would not have given such a representation, if he had read the singular decision of these worthless officials. We are sure that the whole of this part of his work would have been very different from what it is, if he had acquainted himself with the real facts, instead of contenting himself with the colourings and garblings of others, as the foundations of his arguments for the antiquity of infant baptism.

that many were made bishops before they were baptised." So far was infant baptism from being universally practised even at that late period. After this, it appears that, along with many awful corruptions, it spread rapidly, and infant communion with it; but still there were many thousands in this and all succeeding ages, who took their stand against it; and these were, for many centuries, the Puritans of their day, who lifted up their voices against the growing corruptions of the Church during the dark ages. Among those were the Albigenses and Waldenses, who, though some among them conformed to the Catholic Church in baptising infants, as bodies protested against infant baptism through all the periods of their history, so far as it can be traced. A branch of the Albigenses, termed Berengarians, were computed, so far back as the year 1160, to consist of *above eight hundred thousand persons*, and many of them suffered death for opposing infant baptism. As a body, Bellarmine says, "they admitted *only* adults to baptism." "In 1139, the Lateran Council enforced infant baptism by severe measures, and successive councils condemned the Waldenses for rejecting it," *Wall's Hist.*, pt. 12. "In 1147, St. Bernard, the renowned Abbot of Clairval, says, 'The Albigenses and Waldenses administer baptism *only to adults*. They do not believe in infant baptism.'

In 1179, Alexander III., in a council, condemned the Waldensian or Puritan heresy, for denying baptism to infants. And this was one of the special reasons assigned for many of their cruel persecutions.

Infant baptism, then, was not introduced without much opposition; but the extravagant views of the saving efficacy of baptism, entertained by the fathers of the fast degenerating churches, ultimately prevailed over all the remonstrances that were made against them, by the often cruelly-persecuted *dissidents* from the dominant party, such as the Donatists, in earlier times, and the Waldenses and Albigenses of later a-

visible sign of an inward spiritual grace'—and deem it not allowable to 'put asunder what God had joined together;—that, therefore, they confine the administration of this sign to those respecting whom there is some presumption at least, of their being partakers of the thing signified,—viz., divine grace." "They, accordingly," (continues the Archbishop—p. 15) "consider that baptism administered to infants cannot be a *sign of [their individual] regeneration*, since there cannot be even any presumption of its being accompanied by any [special] spiritual advantage [to them] at all." And does the Archbishop controvert this principle of the Baptists? So far from that, he says, "It certainly must be admitted, that, according, at least, to the ordinary use of language, a *sign* of any thing is understood to be such, from its being *regularly accompanied* by the thing of which it is a sign, or at least *by some reasonable presumption of its presence*." (p. 15.)

It is admitted, then, by the respected prelate—it is, indeed, part of the avowed standard doctrine of the Church of England:—

(1) That "baptism is an outward and visible sign of *an inward spiritual grace*;" but,

(2) It is "admitted, also, that, according to the ordinary use of language, a *sign* is understood *to be* a sign, from its being regularly accompanied by at least some reasonable presumption of the presence of the thing signified"—thus, baptism, as "a sign of an inward and spiritual grace," presupposes the existence in the person baptized, of *reasonable evidence* of the presence of that "inward spiritual grace" represented by it, just as, according to the Archbishop's analogy, "the dress or badge of a regiment, is the sign of a man's belonging to that regiment" (p. 16.) ; and, in order to its being a badge, must be *restricted* to those who belong to it. "If a dress or badge (says he, p. 16) were worn indifferently by any indefinite number of persons, some belonging to this regiment or order, and some not, we should consider that it had ceased to be a sign at all, having no longer any *signification* at all." The Archbishop cannot, then, believe that baptism ever was, or ever can be, "a sign of inward spiritual grace," in the case of infants; for,

(3) He admits (p. 15) that "an infant, of course, can-

not afford any *indication* of the inward spiritual grace" represented by baptism; yet,

(4) The Archbishop approves of the baptism of infants—approves, therefore, of "the sign" being applied to the infant, without the possibility of its giving any indication of its possessing "the thing signified"—thus, according to his own showing, reducing the sign to a nullity.

Again, the Archbishop quotes, with approbation, the following passage from another equally high dignitary of the Church, Archbishop Sumner, when endeavouring to prove the doctrine that "baptism conveys regeneration":—

"St. Paul intimates," (says Sumner) "that the Christians he addresses were regenerate—as having 'put off the old man with his deeds'—as having become the temples of the Holy Ghost—'the members of Christ'—as having 'the *spiritual circumcision*,' being 'buried with Christ in baptism'—as having 'received the spirit of adoption'—and as being 'washed, sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' And, to the Galatians, he says, "ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus—for *as many of you* as have been baptised into Christ, *have put on Christ.*" (p. 17) "These addresses and exhortations," he continues, "are founded on the principle, that the disciples, by their dedication," [i.e. their own personal dedication of themselves]—"to God in baptism, had been brought into a state of reconciliation with him, and admitted to privileges which the Apostle calls on them to improve, p. 18.

Now, how do the two Archbishops adapt all this to the case of infants, who are admitted to be incapable of "putting off the old man with his deeds"—incapable of "faith" incapable of manifesting "the spirit of adoption," or of "affording any indication" of the possession of "inward spiritual grace," or of any moral character whatever? Why, thus:—

"Our Church, on the authority of this principle,"—(the principle of the baptised being avowedly regenerated)—"and of the first ages\* of Christianity, considers baptism as *conveying regeneration*."

\* His Lordship should have said *early ages*—not "first ages;" for, as Archbishop Whately candidly admits, (p. 32) "there is not in the Scripture any express injunction, or prohibition relating to infant-baptism;"—nor, as we shall see, can he produce a single example of it. It is true, infant-baptism—not infant-sprinkling, however, but trine immersion)—was introduced at *an early age*—though not during the Apostolic age;—but so also was infant-co-

tion, instructing us to pray before baptism, that the infant 'may be born again, and made an heir of everlasting life'—and to return thanks after baptism, that 'it hath pleased God to regenerate the infant,'" (p. 18)—and, "though not capable, at the time, of profiting by, or understanding" its privileges, the infant "will subsequently become so; and will then, *if he use them aright*, derive the suitable advantages to which he is entitled." (p. 39) Meantime, "the very reason assigned in the Catechism for its being allowable to administer baptism to infants, is, that, *as there are certain indispensable conditions* of the benefits promised to them," [faith, repentance, renunciation of the world, &c.] "so the fulfilment of these conditions is *promised by them*, through their sureties"! (p. 43). [Query—Might not their sureties quite as well promise for them self-examination, and remembrance of Christ, as qualifications for admission to the Lord's Supper?]

And so—(*assuming the right of infants to baptism*)—while, on the one hand, regeneration by baptism is attempted to be proved from the terms regeneration, &c., being *applied to baptised believers*—on the other hand, it is on this very figment of baptismal regeneration, that, in the case of the infant, the accordance of the sign with the thing signified is made to rest!—“Our church” (says Archbishop Sumner) “considers baptism as conveying to the babe *regeneration*”—the thing signified by baptism; and thus *the sign agrees with the substance!*—the sign *produces* the substance and thus it beautifully represents it!—the shadow *creates* the man, and then the man accurately projects the shadow! Such are the absurdities into which even great men are sometimes led by false theories.

The language of Scripture is, “*Repent, and be baptised*”—“*Believe, and be baptised*”—“*If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest*”—“*Ye are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus*,” and, *thus regenerated, are prepared for baptism*. Men, in Scripture, are represented as becoming Christians *first*, and then making a profession of their Christianity *by baptism*—as becoming soldiers *first*, and then wearing the “*badge*” of their soldiership; but all this is

munion (see Note A. at the end), with many other rites which the Church of England has disowned; and, if the practice of the early Church is to be held as authority for infant-baptism, so must it, also, for all the usages of the Church in the age of its introduction—so that the Archbishop's plea on this ground goes for nothing. (See Section xiii. p. 88.)

reversed by the theory of the Church of England ; according to it, infants are MADE *Christians* by means of one of the forms of profession—unconscious beings are *made* soldiers by placing on them the “badge” of soldiership—instead of the “badge” being, as Archbishop Whately candidly admits, a pre-supposal of the military character of the soldier !—The military accoutrements do not *constitute* the man a soldier, but, because *he is a soldier*, he is equipped with the accoutrements.

A sound principle, however, is next propounded by the Archbishop, with all his usual logical precision—a principle which, fairly applied, will at once decide the controversy to every candid mind. It is as follows :—

“ Our safest and most humble pious course is, in any practical question, to endeavour to ascertain, in the first instance, *what was the practice of the Apostles*; and to adhere to that, whenever we find that the rules or customs they sanctioned were not of a merely local or temporary character, but were equally suited to our own age and country ; and, not only is respect due to their *practices*, but these practices will often throw light on their *doctrine* ; since, whatever belief on any point, seems naturally to be applied in what they were accustomed *to do*, may be presumed to have been their *belief* ; and we ought surely rather to put ourselves under their teaching, where it is to be had, than to adopt and act upon the inferences drawn from any theological theory of our own.”—p. 31.

Now, if ever, (thought we)—this vexed question is to be settled by an appeal to *facts*—placed in some new light to which we have never been accustomed—especially when we found the very next sentence running as follows :—

“ With respect to infant-baptism, though there is not in Scripture any express injunction or prohibition respecting it, any one who inquires with an unbiased mind may arrive, I think, at a complete moral certainty as to *what was the practice* of the Apostles and other primitive Christians.”—p. 32.

What could any one expect to follow this (were it not for the occurrence of the suspicious word “moral” in the concluding sentence) but a direct appeal to statements of facts in the sacred narrative, clearly intimating what was the practice of the primitive churches ? But, when we look for bread, behold we are presented with a stone ! Let us see how the Archbishop exemplifies the sound rule just enunciated by himself.—“ We had rather (he had just said) put ourselves under the teaching of Apostolic

*practice*, where it is to be had, than adopt and *act upon* the inferences drawn by any theological theory of our own." (p. 31.) Instead, however, of pointing us to some clearly defined "Apostolic practice" to guide us, he proceeds thus to theorize:—

"For several years, we should remember, they (the primitive Christians) were Jews.—Now, men brought up under the law, *would, of course, adhere to the principles of that law, wherever they were not at variance with Christianity.*—Now, baptism having always been clearly understood to be the initiatory rite by which members were admitted into the Christian church, it cannot, *I think, be doubted, by any unprejudiced inquirer*, that the early Christians *must have been* prepared to observe the like rules in admitting [by baptism] members into the Christian church, to those they had been accustomed to [in the Jewish Church]. If, as is the fact, they had been accustomed to enrol in the Jewish church their own infants and proselytes of all ages"—[he should have added, *with their servants and slaves also*]"—"then, as a matter of course, THEY WOULD adhere to the same rule," "in admitting to the Christian church, unless *expressly for-bidden*."—p. 32-34.

"Surely," the reader must be ready to exclaim, "This cannot be Archbishop Whately—the clear-headed, the generally candid Archbishop Whately, slipping out from his conclusion more than half his premises!" Besides, he

\* The Jewish law of admission was, (Gen. xvii. 10, 13), "This is my covenant, which ye shall keep between me and you, and *thy* seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money must needs be circumcised;"—the practice, as exhibited by Abraham himself, was (ver. 26), "In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son;"—but this was not all (ver 27), "And *all the men of his house—BORN IN THE HOUSE, and BOUGHT WITH MONEY OF THE STRANGER, were circumcised with him.*" Now, says the Archbishop, "I think it cannot be doubted, by any unprejudiced inquirer, that the early Christians must have been prepared to observe the like rules in admitting [by baptism] members into the Christian church, to those they had been accustomed to" [in admitting members by circumcision into the Jewish church.] Is the Archbishop, then, prepared to follow out his own canon—prepared to admit into the church of England, along with any converted head of a heathen or Mahomedan family, not only himself and all his male children, but also "*all the men of his house, born in his house, and bought with money of any stranger,*" and to compel them, under the penalty Gen. xvii. 14, to be baptised?

was to point out to us, for our guidance, what the apostles and primitive Christians *did*—but he presents to us, instead, a lame theory of what *he thinks* they *would be likely to do*, under the promptings of Jewish custom!—forgetting, all the time, that, though the defective analogy had been complete, the apostles had a higher authority to present to the Jews for their guidance, than “the custom of their fathers,” though that custom had, for the time being, and for the purpose intended, the Divine sanction. The apostle Paul himself thought, at one time, that—*guided by Jewish custom and prejudice*, and in defence of a system unquestionably of Divine though temporary appointment, he “ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.” In his ardour in behalf of the religion of Moses and the prophets, “he persecuted the church of God and wasted it, and profited in the Jews’ religion above many his equals in his own nation, being *more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers*; but, when it pleased God to reveal his Son in him—immediately he conferred not with flesh and blood.” The “principles of the Jewish law” (now superseded)—its temporary ritual, or Divinely sanctioned practices, (now abrogated)—were to be his guides no more; but, he was to go forth, as the Apostle of the Gentiles, to preach among them a system developed *out of*, but *widely different from*, the system of rites and ceremonies established among the Jews—a system adapted to the circumstances of Gentiles and Jews alike—and a system from which were entirely extruded the old Jewish notions of *exclusivism* on the one hand, and of *inclusivism* on the other—a system that was not, like the Jewish, to be peculiar to one particular nation; nor, like it, to include in its embrace—merely on account of domestic relationship,

—If not, his rule is worse than useless. Yet, on the flimsy ground of this sophism, he draws this conclusion, “We have therefore, I conceive, a complete moral certainty [sinking the case of adult sons, and of all male servants, of all ages] that the earliest Christians did practise *infant-baptism*, and that it received at least the tacit sanction and approval of the Apostles: whose prohibitions of it we should not have failed (says he) to find recorded, had it been at all objectionable”! Where, then, are the prohibitions of baptising “men-servants”—either *born in the convert’s house, or bought with the convert’s money of any stranger*? The Jewish rule is as strong for the full-grown slave as it is for the infant son.

the children and servants of those who adopted it; & a system under which every individual is individually treated, according to his own individual reception or rejection of it—his infants and servants being respectively dealt with on principles entirely different from those of the common economy, as has been pretty fully explained in our dealing with the arguments of Dr. Wardlaw.

But, passing the illogical character of the Archbishop's argument, let the same reasoning be applied to the communion, and the conclusion in favour of seating at the Lord's table not only all the professing Christian's children but also his servants (or slaves), will be quite irresistible. The argument is (p. 32) "Men brought up under the law would, *of course*, adhere to the principles of that law whenever these were not at variance with Christianity." Now it is argued (p. 40), "The Apostle Paul himself" recognizes some analogy between *baptism* and *circumcision*; but we reply, so did he, and so does the Archbishop (p. 37) recognize an analogy between the Lord's Supper and the Passover.

Then, says the Archbishop (p. 33), "It cannot, I think be doubted, that the early Christians *must have been prepared* to observe the like rules, in admitting (by baptism) members into the Christian church to those they had been accustomed to, in reference to the Jewish;"—if so, we reply it cannot be doubted that they *must have been prepared* to admit all the children and servants of Christian converts to the Lord's table; for the passover was prepared for the whole household, "*according to the number of souls*" in it—(Exod. xii. 4, 48, 49).

"We have, then, (says the Archbishop) a complete moral certainty that the earliest churches did practice *infant baptism*!"—if so, we reply, we have (for the same reason) "a complete moral certainty that they did practice" *infant-communion*, and free or bond *servant-communion*, as well as baptism!

"And so also" (continues the Archbishop) "if we would understand what was meant by the 'baptising of a household' which we read of in the New Testament—whether it included *infant-children*, our guide should be the practice of the Israelites;"—if so, we reply, we should be guided in the same manner as to free or bond *servants*, whether the term "household" did not include them as well, as in

respects the Lord's Supper. According to the Archbishop's argument, it must follow, that, whenever a head of a family becomes a Christian, all his children (his sons at least) old and young, with all his servants (male servants at least) old and young, ought to be admitted to the Lord's table, without regard to personal piety! Again we repeat it—such arguments are unworthy of Archbishop Whately.

It would be foreign to the object of this notice, to follow the Archbishop through his discussions on the accidents of baptism—his dealing with *The Friends*, in their rejection of the ordinance, and his dealing with those who ascribe to the *act* of baptism a regenerating power. The only other passage that seems to require notice here, is that on p. 44 in which he gives the Church's view of the benefits derived from baptism, as signified by the term "remission of sins" so frequently alluded to in the Church-services. This term (says the Archbishop)

"Seems to denote that the duly baptised are deemed no more aliens from God—disqualified for his service—and excluded from the offers of the gospel," [are all, then, excluded from "the offers of the gospel" but those who are duly baptised?] "but are received into the number of God's adopted children, and have the promise of the forgiveness of sins, and, as it were, the treasury thrown open to them of Divine grace," [vast privileges these to be obtained through being 'duly baptised']!—still, all this is only conditional in its final results; for, it is added that] "the duly baptised will, through this treasury of Divine grace, attain final salvation, if they duly avail themselves of it, though not otherwise." p. 44.

Why, the same thing may be said of the most ignorant heathen idolater—the most bigoted Mussulman—the most unbelieving Jew. If they repent, and believe the gospel, they will all "attain to final salvation," as well as the most 'duly baptised' child of Christian parents, when he also repents and believes. While reducing, however, the strong terms "remission of sins," "regeneration," &c., as *conveyed by baptism*, to an airy shadow (the substance being only obtainable on the very same grounds as those on which an unbaptised heathen may obtain it), he is constrained to admit, that "the language used by our reformers on this subject is certainly not exempt from difficulties and dangers to 'the unlearned and unstable.'" But, again he seems to rally, and says, "To have omitted however, all mention of 'regeneration,' which is ofte

mentioned and alluded to in Scripture, is what no one would think of—not, we would say, if the “duly baptised” were real believers, as was understood to be the case with those to whom, in Scripture, the term was applied, *which it never was to babes*. The case is simply this—the Scriptures speak of *BELIEVERS* being “converted,” “born again,” “regenerated,” and *therefore* “baptised”—hence, they speak of “*as many as had been baptised into Christ*”—as persons who had “put on Christ,” had “risen with Christ to newness of life,” had “received the spirit of adoption,” &c. (all quite appropriate in their case); but, the Church of England, *assuming that infants should be baptised*, applies the same terms to them that the Scriptures apply to *believers only*; and hence the medley of confusion and contradiction into which its adherents fall whenever they deal with the subject of baptism. On no other subject would it have been possible, we believe, for Archbishop Whately seriously to have written in such an illogical manner as he has written on baptism—on no other subject could he, we are convinced, have exemplified so strikingly the perils of occupying a false position.

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## II.

### LORD LYTTELTON ON INFANT-BAPTISM.

IN Lord Lyttelton’s publication, he deals mainly with the doctrine of Baptismal regeneration, on which a great diversity of extremely vague opinions are held by men of note in the Church of England. From among these opinions, it seems to be the principal aim of Lord Lyttelton to select or propound such a signification as will be *likely* to concentrate, or at least, as he thinks, *ought* to concentrate, the scattered and varied views of the evangelical members of the Church. This he thinks he has found in the following proposition, viz. :—

“That every baptised infant receives the *power*, to be available <sup>—when</sup> required, to serve God according to the gospel; in other that he may be saved if he will.” p. 13.

Further on in the pamphlet (p. 29) he says,

"I know it is sometimes held, that the blessing depends on the faith and prayers of those who bring the child—surely (exclaims he) one of the hardest of sayings, that of two helpless infants, one shall be effectively received into God's favour, and the other not, according to the poor, and weak, and inadequate—often, indeed, casual and accidental state of mind of two or three other people." "How is it possible," (he asks, p. 26) "to suppose a difference in God's sight, in the actual state of two unconscious infants?"

But, we remark in passing, does not the same objection stand no less strong against his own view of the doctrine? might not those holding this opinion retort on him thus:—"Surely it is one of the hardest sayings, that of two helpless infants,—*one shall receive power to be saved if he will*—the other not, according to the impulse, whim, or neglect, of those whose duty he supposes it to be, to have the infants under their charge baptised?" It will be difficult to point out a shade of difference in the hardship of suspending the blessing (whatever that may be imagined to be) on the state of mind necessary for the *presenting of a suitable prayer*, and that of suspending it on the state of mind necessary to *provide for the performance of a ceremony*. Before, however, formally noticing his Lordship's view of baptismal regeneration, it may not be uninstructive to advert to certain of the views of it presented by noted churchmen belonging to the Evangelical party.

There are some, it seems, such as Archdeacon Hare, who assert, "that infant-baptism admits only to certain *possibilities!*"—possibilities of what?—of regeneration?—of salvation?—Is it meant that *without baptism*, or *until baptism*, regeneration or salvation is impossible?—If not, what does it mean?—

There are others, such as Mr. Hastings, who hold, "that baptism confers *a capacity*." But what "capacity" for spiritual blessings has a babe baptised even in St. Paul's, or at Lambeth, that is not possessed by any other babe who has not been baptised at all? We have never heard of any "capacities" possessed by the children of Episcopalians, not possessed by those who are unbaptised. The young Gurneys, for instance, without baptism, showed as much capacity for the spiritualities of Christianity, as the children of any Archbishop have done.

There are others, again, who maintain, that by regeneration is meant such a change of heart, as will (in many cases), *in due time*, be manifested by a life of holiness; and in this case they affirm,

"That the blessing of regeneration is undoubtedly conveyed to *some* duly baptized infants; but, in the impossibility of our discriminating the cases, they pronounce the same charitable judgment upon all." p. 10.

That is—if, in after life, an Episcopalian becomes pious, it is then *proved* that he was regenerated in baptism!—but, what of such holy men as he who was called the seraphic Samuel Pierce, who was regenerated without baptism? It is most unfortunate, moreover, that the only proof furnished by the advocates of this notion, is the statement concerning John the Baptist, that "he was filled with the Holy Ghost, even from the womb;" but this was long before Christian baptism was instituted—consequently, whatever meaning may be attached to the phrase, it is no case of baptismal regeneration.

There are others, again, who ridicule the idea, that the term regeneration in this sense, can be at all applicable to infants; for, "in *no* case *can* the words of the church service be actually [thus] true—in *no* case *can* an infant be [thus] regenerated."—(p. 11)—because, according to the very definitions given of regeneration, by this class of churchmen, infants are incapable of it. Thus far, they agree with Lord Lyttelton.

"An infant" (says his Lordship, p. 12) "is necessarily incapable of such regeneration as is here required"—or, according to Mr Goode, such as is necessary for the salvation of an adult;"—and, therefore, a distinction is made "between infant-regeneration, and that regeneration of the heart—that spiritual regeneration, which is necessary in the case of one come to the years of discretion." p. 12.

All the regeneration that this class contend for is of a vague, undefinable, embryo kind, which, slumbering during the period of infancy, yet in some mysterious way secures the infant's safety in the event of death; but which, if life be spared, rises, *in the cases of those who foster its growth in after years*, into a holy maturity!

Others, again—and these by far the most numerous class in the church, disclaim all secondary senses of re-

generation, and give to it its broadest and most unqualified Scriptural sense—maintaining, that, in this high sense, infants are, by baptism, purified from all natural guilt and defilement—“grafted into the holy Church of Christ”—become the children of God, and are “made heirs of the kingdom of heaven.” Hence, after baptism, they present, in all its literality, the form of thanksgiving appointed by the church:—“We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy church.” So, in confirmation, also—after the entire absence of all religious character has been, in numberless instances, manifested by the young people confirmed, a similar style of address is, as it appears to us, presumptuously and profanely presented to God, in the following words:—“Almighty and ever-living God, *who hast rous'd* to regenerate THESE THY SERVANTS *by water and by the Holy Ghost*, and hast given unto them *forgiveness of all their sins*”! &c.

The doctrine of the Church of Scotland, and of those who subscribe the Westminster Confession of Faith, is somewhat allied to that of the church of England, though in Scotland the doctrine of “baptismal regeneration,” as commonly understood, is in general rejected.\* The answer, however, to the question in the Shorter Catechism, “What is baptism?” is, “Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water—doth signify and *seal our engrafting into Christ, our partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.*”—How far short of “baptismal regeneration” this is, it will be no easy matter to explain—the “*washing with water*,” of the Scottish Church, and the “*warily dipping*” of the English (ultimately changed, in practice, into *sprinkling*), seem to possess talismanic virtues for changing the state and character of infants, very much alike—the one “grafts into the body of Christ's church”—the other “*seals*,” ratifies, or confirms “our engrafting into Christ;”—the one “conveys regeneration,” and the other “*seals*,” ratifies, or confirms “our partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace”—the difference, as to ultimate effect, it will require a high microscopic power to detect.

\* See Note B. at the end.

But, whence has all the vast variety of opinions, especially in the Church of England, respecting the efficacy of baptism, originated? Chiefly, if not entirely, from the unwarrantable administration of the ordinance to infants, and the consequent misapplication to them of language which has no rational meaning but as applied to those who know and believe the gospel. The constant recurrence of this language in the New Testament in connexion with believers, and the entire absence of any reference to the condition of infants in connexion with baptism, plainly show that such a thing as infant-baptism was unknown in the Apostolic age. Lord Lyttelton, indeed, does not pretend to know of any Scriptural authority for it\*—his principle being the good, easy, Catholic one, of accepting the authority of the church, without examination! He says (p 17),

“Mr. —— told me he thought my view very reasonable and probable in itself, but that *he could not find it in Scripture*. To this I must reply, (says his Lordship) that *I assume, on the authority of the Church of England*, that warrant for infant-baptism is to be found in Scripture, and therefore I do not go about to prove it!”

Again (p. 23),

“Even within our church, Mr. Orlando Forester, for instance, admitted that the reasoning [on regeneration] seemed to lead him away from the doctrine of infant-baptism entirely, to that of the Baptists, which is at least a perfectly consistent system. He said, however, that *he thought it safer that infants should be baptised!*”—*[just as some, in the early ages, thought it safer still that they should partake of the communion also]*—“though with no full understanding why it should be so.”—[This gentleman seems to have forgotten the Apostolic maxim, ‘Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.’] “It was, however, (says his Lordship,) ‘according to that unreasoning and implicit acceptance of the order of the church to which I before alluded’”!

This is as low a prostration of the judgment to the dictum of the church as the soundest Catholic could possibly exact.

Assuming, then, on the authority of the church (which, at the very best, is that of so many partially-informed men, just emerging from Popery, in a comparatively dark age†)—that infants should be baptised, and finding such passages abounding in Scripture, respecting *the baptised*, as Lord Lyttelton, Archbishop Sumner, and others have

\* See Note C. at the end.      † See Note D. at the end.

quoted, it is no wonder that they should be puzzled beyond measure, what meaning to attach to the term *regeneration*—whether it means really a change of state, and change of character, or only a “*capacity*” for that change; or a change in embryo, securing to the infant present safety, and *possibly* a holy life afterwards; or a “*power* to be made available when required”!

The last is the sense advocated by Lord Lyttelton as the primary sense of the term regeneration, although not a single shadow of such a sense is to be found in Scripture, while the Scriptural meaning of the term, as well as its equivalents “born again,” and “born of the Spirit,” he most amusingly calls a “secondary sense” of it! After quoting 1 John iii. 9, he says (p. 23),

“The expression ‘his seed remaineth’ means distinctly more than that the seed has been sown; it means, surely, that the seed has been not only received, but *cherished*, and *has borne*, and *continues to bear* fruit. Now (his Lordship continues), it seems to me, that it is the idea that this, *which is the secondary* and extended, or developed sense in Scripture, of *regeneration*, is the only sense which has led many to deny that *all infants are by baptism regenerated*”—(which he, of course, affirms in his own peculiar way)!

This, however, is the *only* sense of it contained in the New Testament—he has produced no other—he *can* produce no other;—what he assumes as its *primary* sense is not to be found there, either in word or sense. But, his Lordship’s *exigency* required another sense of the term regeneration, to admit of its being applied to infants *at all*; and, having yielded up his judgment to the church; and having *assumed* that the church *must have* had some Scriptural authority for baptising infants (though he himself, like Mr. Orlando Forester, knows of none), he must try to discover a sense in which the word *regeneration* may be applied to *all* baptised infants; for, the church applies the term to such; and, moreover, in the Scriptures it is always implied that the baptised *have been regenerated*. The following is the manner in which his Lordship flounders in the midst of this difficulty. He says (p. 20),

“I would strongly uphold the use of the word *regenerate* as suitable for the purpose [of designating the baptised] without any doctrine of hypothesis [that they may or may not be regenerated]; and I will venture to attempt a brief examination of a few of the chief passages in Scripture on the subject.

"With respect to those passages generally, the view I would submit to the better judgment of others, is this—that they are to be understood rather of adult-baptism than of infant-baptism."

Very good! but where are the passages that refer to infant-baptism?—Nowhere in the New Testament. His Lordship proceeds:—

"I must repeat, that I *assume, throughout*, the admission (*i.e.* by his brethren in the English Church), that in some cases certainly, though in *which* we cannot tell, the infant *is* regenerate; and I venture to think, that those who recoil from the idea that this can *always be so*, have not enough observed, that the sense in which *they* deem it important that the word regenerate should be used" (*i.e.* the common sense—the *Scriptural* sense), "goes beyond what is possible of infants. We should, therefore, be brought as before, to the conclusion, *contrary to our assumption*, that no infant ever can be regenerate"—[*i.e.* regenerated by baptism—which he imagines would be a very serious consequence!].

Lord Lyttelton clearly perceives, that, in the sense in which regeneration is intended to be understood in Scripture, it cannot possibly apply to infants—therefore, as noticed above, some sense must be devised to accommodate the word to the figment of *the baptismal regeneration of infants!* His Lordship goes on:—

"I now quote those passages which speak directly of birth; and I will request attention to them:—

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ *is born of God*.' If this be the exclusive definition of the new birth, how can it be predicated of an infant?"

No other definition, however, *is* given in Scripture.—How, then, is infant-baptismal regeneration to be preserved intact?—THE CHURCH (though not Scripture) maintains it!—therefore, regeneration must submit to have a new, and formerly unheard-of, sense imposed upon it!—Again, (p. 22):—

"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world,' not (says his Lordship) *will* overcome, but *does* overcome.—'Whosoever is born of God sinneth not . . . . he is begotten of God, *keepeth himself*, and that wicked one toucheth him not.'—'As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even to them who believe on his name, which are born of God*.'—'As many as are led ("surely," says his Lordship, "in their lives,") by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.' In this sense (he justly observes) it could never be true of any infant, that he *was* or became the child of God," &c.

"Surely, then," (continues his Lordship) "the true way to have the doctrine is according to the well-established principle

in interpreting Scripture, of primary and secondary senses. As was said before, the above passages were addressed to adult converts, and the assumption is, that they not only had received the grace, but had abided in it."—But this he assumes to be a secondary sense of the term ; "and (he continues) a secondary sense implies a primary sense—moreover, it being admitted that regeneration is truly predicate of some infants—*of none of whom it can be predicated in the full Scriptural sense*"—[but who has a right to impose any sense not Scriptural ?]—"it follows, that it must be so in its *first sense* of some initial grace, which, as it seems, cannot purport less than (says his Lordship) I have claimed for it."

All this might have some force with those who *admit* the propriety of infant-baptism, and *admit* moreover, that it "conveys regeneration," in some sense, to the infant ; but, as an argument for either, against those who deny both, it is futile.

In answer to the Bishop of Melbourne, who, it seems, had said, "that the Church could not certainly assert "the regeneration of the infant," *which it could not certainly know*"—Lord Lyttelton replies,

"That seems to assume, that regeneration can only be known to have been given, by outward fruits or by *some* fruits ; which confounds a thing and its effects, as if the grace of God could not be received in vain !" p. 55.

Regeneration, then, may be not only several incongruous varieties of spiritual life, but may even merge into spiritual death ! Moreover, how his Lordship can *know* the existence of such a thing as the *regeneration of infants* without "some fruits," or a revelation from God, seems peculiarly mysterious.

This brings up the consideration more especially of Lord Lyttelton's view of baptismal regeneration, viz.—

That it is "a power received by the infant, to be available when required, to serve God according to the gospel ; in other words, that he may be saved if he will." p. 13.

But, who told Lord Lyttelton of any latent "power" received by the infant at baptism ? Certainly, there is not the faintest whisper of any such power to be learned from the Scriptures\*—nearly as certain is it, that he never was

\* The Rev. H. M'Neile, of Liverpool, with a candour that does him credit, says,—"Concerning the efficacy of baptism upon infants—concerning the baptism of infants at all, I DO NOT KNOW ONE WORD OF GOD."

informed by the Church, of any such power; and he has repeatedly admitted, that no sign can be given forth by the infants baptised. How, then, can its existence be known? Still, however, he maintains, without the possibility of knowing it, that

"The power to be saved in the way of the gospel, through faith and love, by the aid of the Spirit, *is the gift conferred in baptism!*" p. 3.

But, the Scriptures invariably reverse the process, and require, as he himself admits, (p. 18) "repentance and faith *in order to baptism;*" but here, the *effect* of the infant's baptism is to impart the *power* to repent, believe, and love, *when it arrives at the years of accountability!* "This repentance and faith, however, *in order to baptism,* he says, is required only of those who are capable of them"—to those who are incapable, (says his Lordship) although "the same command applies" (!) baptism is to be administered *for the purpose of giving them the power* of repenting and believing at some future period! What hope, then, is left for the repentance and faith of any who have not been duly baptised? or, if they *may* repent and believe, as the three thousand did on the day of Pentecost, and many in every age of the world since, *without previous baptism*, what is the benefit of that rite to infants? None in this respect, and, even according to his Lordship, very little indeed, in any way. He says, (p. 27),

"I must avow my conviction that very nearly the whole, *if not quite the whole,* weight and moment of infant-baptism, lies in its application—not to infants while such, but to them when growing up.—We do not know at how early an age there may be a responsible will; but after the period when it begins to act, as it is admitted on all hands"—[perhaps by the espousers of baptismal regeneration of *some* kind!]—"the fruits of grace, however conferred and nourished, are to be looked for. And the practical importance of the doctrine is, that it is the sure, unconditional basis, and foundation of Christian education (!) Without it," (says he) "I do not know what I am handling and leaning on—with it, I know that I am attempting to train a young soldier in his conflict with evil, who *has* the effectual sword of the Spirit put into his hands, *if he will use it!*"

A singularly curious argument truly! But, to what does it amount? Just to this—baptism (and hence baptismal regeneration) is of very little moment, if any, to infants during the period of infancy, nor till they come to

have a responsible will—but then, we are told, they have “the sword of the Spirit”—*which is the word of God*—“put into their hands, *if they will use it!*” And, has not any unbaptised boy or girl, who is possessed of the Scriptures, *the very same privilege?* “What advantage, then,” *is there in infant-baptism?* or “what profit is there” *in baptismal regeneration?* None, in any way; but, on the contrary, both are “a delusion and a snare,” and the sooner they are swept away, the better it will be for all concerned.\* They have no foundation in Scripture, but had their origin in periods of comparative darkness and superstition—amid usages and rites that have been for many ages abandoned, and that were never admitted by the churches of the reformation.

Much self-sacrifice, however, will have to be brought into requisition—a high tone of piety, and implicit submission to the Divine appointments, must be called forth, before such a consummation as is here desired can be effected. The spirit of Adoniram Judson, and his devoted partner, must much more generally be manifested by professing Christians than at present, before any very sensible progress can be made towards that lovely Christian simplicity which shines forth so beautifully from the pages of the New Testament. The following extracts from letters and papers of these devoted servants of Christ (with which we close) will show more plainly our meaning:—

“While translating the New Testament” (Mrs. J. says, in a letter to her mother), “Mr. Judson used frequently to say, that the Baptists were right in their mode of administering the ordinance. Knowing he should have to meet the Baptists at Serampore (he was then on his way to

\* The United States correspondent of “The Freeman,” in a letter just received, says, “Many things are operating here to fix the attention of the Church on the subject of baptism. Ministers are speaking—the Pedobaptist press is discussing its claims, and the churches, to a great extent, are allowing infant-baptism quietly to die out. Never was it at so low an ebb before. Its hold upon the churches is weakening daily. Its advocates feel this. They would roll back the tide if they could, but the effort is vain. Onward it advances, and daily is it acquiring both depth and power.” A similar movement has, for sometime, been in progress among the Reformed Churches in France.

India), he felt it important to attend to the subject more closely, to be able to defend his sentiments.—As we were waiting the arrival of our brethren, and having nothing in particular to attend to, he again took up the subject. I tried to have him give it up, and rest satisfied in his old sentiments, frequently telling him, that, if *he* became a Baptist *I would not*. He, however, said, he felt it his duty to examine closely a subject on which he had so many doubts. After we removed to Calcutta, he found in the library many books on both sides, which he determined to read candidly and prayerfully, and to hold fast, or embrace the truth, however mortifying—however great the sacrifice might be. I now, also, (says Mrs. J.,) began reading on the subject, with all my prejudices on the Pedobaptist side. After close examination for several weeks, we were both constrained to acknowledge, that the truth appeared to be with the Baptists. It was extremely trying to reflect on the consequences of our becoming Baptists. We knew that it would wound and grieve our dear Christian friends at home—that we should lose their approbation and esteem. We thought it probable our support would be withdrawn, and, what was more distressing, we knew that we must be separated from our missionary associates, and go alone to some heathen land. These things were very trying to us, and caused our hearts to bleed for anguish. We felt, we had no home in this world, and no friend but each other.”

The following is from Mrs. Judson's journal of date 23d August, 1812:—

“I have been much distressed for the week past, in view of the probable separation between our missionary brethren and ourselves. Mr J. feels convinced, from Scripture, *that he has never been baptised*, and that he cannot conscientiously administer baptism to infants. As we are perfectly united with our brethren in every other respect, and are much attached to them, it is inexpressibly painful to leave them, and go alone to a separate station. *But every sacrifice that duty requires must be made.*—It is painfully mortifying to my natural feelings to think seriously of renouncing a system, which I have been taught from infancy to believe and respect; and embrace one which I have been taught to despise;—but, while, if ever I sought

to know the truth—if ever I looked up to the Father of lights—if ever I gave up myself to the inspired word, I have done so during this investigation—the result is, that laying aside my former prejudices, and fairly appealing to the Scriptures, I feel convinced *that nothing really can be said in favour of infant-baptism or sprinkling.* We expect soon to be baptised."

Mr. Judson, in a letter dated the first of the following month, says,

" Within a few months I have experienced an entire change of sentiment on the subject of baptism. My doubts concerning my former system of belief commenced during my passage from America to this country; and, after many painful trials, which none can know but those who are taught to relinquish a system in which they have been educated, I settled down in the full persuasion, that the immersion of a professing believer in Christ is the only Christian baptism. Mrs. Judson is united with me in this persuasion, and we expect to be baptised next Lord's day."

In connexion with the striking instance of unquestioning submission to Divine authority, and firm decision of character here displayed by Mr. and Mrs. Judson, the writer hopes he will be pardoned for introducing another instance just brought into public notice, as illustrative of the same Christian excellencies, in one still more illustrious of late in the annals of India. A few years ago, Sir Henry Havelock (then Lieut.-Col. Havelock) took part in the proceedings at the formation of the Western India branch of the Evangelical Alliance; and in the course of his address made the following remarks:—"The meeting had heard that the object to be attempted was the cordial union of men of all religious denominations, in the cause of so much vital religion as was common to them all. Now, it happened, that, though he had, for about two years, in this place, and in Bombay, been in the practice of communing—he was sure with much pleasure, and he would humbly hope not without profit—with the Presbyterians of the Free Church of Scotland, he yet belonged to another section of Christians—the Baptists,—so he stood there, as it were, the representative (a very poor one he would ac-

knowledge) of a denomination. As such, however, he gladly gave his suffrage in favour of the species of union which it was their aim this evening to organize. He begged, nevertheless, to say, that in making this declaration, he must not be misunderstood as being loosely connected with the principles of that denomination. On the contrary, he should (he hoped) die in the belief that Christ's church on earth would never be established upon the basis on which it ought to stand, until the ordinance of baptism was reformed—until first principles were resorted to, and the admission of every member into a church should be on his own credible profession of effectual faith in the Redeemer, evidenced in his life and conversation."

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### CONCLUDING ADDRESS TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

HAVING now finished my remarks in answer to Archbishop Whately and Lord Lyttelton, in addition to the more formal discussion of the questions, "*What is the scriptural mode*"—and "*Who are the authorised subjects*," of Christian Baptism? all I ask of you is, your giving to the whole your candid consideration. I have often been not a little astonished to witness the light and careless manner in which many Christian men treat all allusions to the duty of examining the solemn subject of Christian Baptism—as if it were one of trivial importance—as if a mere observance of the forms which custom has established were sufficient to meet the requirements of the Divine law. The aphorism adopted, and so powerfully enforced, by Dr. Chalmers, "*What is written in the law?—how readest thou?*" seems to have been entirely disowned by them, in favour of the more convenient consideration of *how their neighbours do*, backed by the solatium that if they err, they err in good company, and have the sanction for their practice, of the best and brightest ornaments of their church, in the present and former ages.

You must have been often surprised to hear how the easy supporters of *opposing systems* are in the habit of expressing their subjection to the human authorities to

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whom they have been respectively accustomed to pay deference—as if, because they were great men, and good men, and learned men, they must needs be infallible—all infallible with their respective admirers, though all *infallibly contradicting* each other!—the *infallible* church of Rome contradicting the *unerring* church of England—or, still more, the *unerring* Westminster Assembly of Divines;—the *orthodox* Calvin contradicting the *impregnable* Arminius;—the *unchallengeable* Wardlaw contradicting the *unassailable* Chalmers! The partisans of each resign their judgments to the great individual minds, or the great awe-inspiring shadows dignified by such terms as “the Church,”\* “the Council,” “the Assembly,” &c. to which they bow—forgetting, all the while, that the great names they worship are the names of fallible men, and the great abstractions before which they prostrate their reason, are mere aggregates of men equally fallible. They forget, too, that whatever a man does not understand and reason out for himself, is not really his, but the assumed conclusions of others, which he merely appropriates; and, that the exercise of private judgment is one of the noblest attributes of man.

But, trusting that *you* will not readily discard the exercise of private judgment, I press upon you the candid and careful examination of the preceding pages—hoping, as I do, that the opposite conclusions to which great men, under peculiar influences, have come, instead of deterring you, through false modesty, from examining for yourself, will stimulate you to still more anxious inquiry, under the consideration thus afforded, that the greatest of men are liable to err—and, especially, feeling, as you must, the force of the Divine injunction, “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good”—not what others may pronounce to be good, but what, after the maturest reflection, appears to you to be most in accordance with the revealed will of God.

To clear the way for an intelligent appreciation of the questions at issue, I would call your special attention to the difference between moral and positive laws—the former being binding in their very nature, irrespective of the authority of a lawgiver—the latter deriving the whole of their binding obligation from that authority alone. Obedience to the latter—for instance, to the law of Baptism, or of the Lord’s Supper—is a much severer test of

\* See Note D. at the end.

submission to the authority of a lawgiver, than obedience to a law felt to be just and good irrespective of its being embodied in a legal code. Thus, obedience to the first law delivered to mankind, was a much stronger test of submission to the authority of God, than obedience to the command, "Thou shalt not kill,"—thus, "go wash seven times in Jordan," was much more trying to Naaman's faith in Elisha the prophet, than if he had provided him with a medical solution to anoint his body;—and thus, "be immersed in water in my name," is a much more decisive test of submission to the authority of Christ, than that conveyed in the injunction, "Thou shalt not steal." But all this is singularly reversed in the reasonings of even some good men, who treat Divine appointments, as if they had received an intimation from on high, to obey them, or change them, or discard them, as it suited their caprice or convenience! But, God did not treat as trivial the liberty taken by Nadab and Abihu, when they "offered strange fire before the Lord"—Moses did not command the Israelites to punish slightly the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath-day (see p. 6). Nor is there any likelihood, that if he who came to Christ to have his sight restored, and who was told to go to the pool of Siloam and wash, had gone to the temple and anointed his eyes with salve, instead of washing them in the pool, he would ever have had the privilege of returning "*seeing*" (see p. 104).

Now, when Christ issued the commission to the Apostles—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature, *baptising* them, &c."—When Peter, on the day of Pentecost, in fulfilment of this commission, preached the gospel to the assembled thousands, "out of every nation under heaven," and commanded them to "Repent and be *baptised*" every one of them, it cannot be doubted that both Christ and Peter, intended, by the word *baptise*, some definite action to be performed, respecting which there was then no danger of mistake. The word *baptise* was a word in common use, and all knew its meaning; nor do we find, in all the sacred narrative, the slightest hesitation as to the form, in attending to the rite, whenever the proper subjects of it appeared. I have shown (p. 7.) that, when Christ used the word *baptise*, he used no word of ambiguous import, but one the meaning, of which was then, is now, and ever has been, *to dip, plunge, over-*

*whelm*, so that, to this day, a Greek, or one who uses the Greek language, if he were commanded by his master *to baptise* an article in water, would no more think of sprinkling a few drops of water on it, than an English servant would, if commanded, *to plunge* it in water. Now, according to Archbishop Whatley's sound rule of Biblical interpretation, when treating of the term *regeneration*—"We are not to be satisfied with any figurative sense, or any sense whatever, that words can be brought to bear; but to seek for that in which they were originally designed and believed to be understood. It is (he observes) evidently of the first importance to look to the meaning which the expression appears to have conveyed, at the time, to the persons addressed; for, we cannot suppose (he adds) that the sacred writers were not aware in what sense they would be understood by those they addressed, or that they would knowingly leave them in error on any point of practical importance."—We are no more at liberty, then, when Christ plainly commanded his followers to be *immersed in his name*, to conclude that *sprinkling will do*, than when he commanded them to *eat bread and drink wine* in commemoration of his death, to conclude that *smelling or looking will do*. In the former case, indeed, the violation of the command is much more serious than it would be in the latter, for it deprives the rite of more than half its significance. The impressive emblems of *burial and resurrection with Christ*, are entirely lost by the modern Romish innovation of changing immersion into sprinkling\*—so that, not only is the substitution of the latter for the former, a bold tampering with an explicit Divine command, but a display of no small degree of temerity in frustrating one of the intentions of a Divine ordinance. (see p. 7—36.)

With respect to the proper subjects of baptism, I have shown, that they are believers, and *believers only*—that the commission to the apostles includes none but believers—that there is not one instance of infant-baptism, nor the slightest allusion to it in the whole New Testament—nor any reference to it for several ages after the apostles—that

\* The change was made by the Romish Church so late as 1311—before that time immersion was the universal practice throughout the Christian world, as it is still by the whole Greek Church, and all who never owned the authority of Rome.

it first made its appearance in the world, side by side with infant-communion, from which it was at last separated, only by the decision of the Church of Rome—that both arose out of extravagant notions of the absolute necessity of baptism in order to salvation—that along with both, we find exorcisms before baptism, anointing with oil after it, prayers for the dead, bowing to the east, and many other superstitious rites and ceremonies which have been long since abandoned by the western churches, together with infant-communion, which was for many ages practised, along with infant-baptism; while, in the west, again, infant-sprinkling—a still greater deviation from the original ordinance, has been substituted for the infant-baptism of the Greek and other ancient churches. I have shown, also, that, while baptism can be of no possible use to infants, its consequences have been seriously injurious to thousands individually—to churches collectively, and to the right understanding of important portions of Divine truth. (See p. 37-102.)

In my replies to Archbishop Whately and Lord Lyttelton, I have shown the impossibility of reconciling the *baptism* of infants with the language of the New Testament; and, hence the strainings and twistings, to which men of intelligence find it necessary to have recourse, in treating the Scriptures in connexion with an assumption of the propriety of infant-baptism—issuing, generally, in all the extravagances of Puseyism; or in the shifting and self-contradictions of such evangelical reasoners as Whately and Lyttelton. (See App. I., II.)

Again commanding the whole subject to your most rigid consideration, and praying that you may be guided into the truth, both theoretically and practically,

I am, &c.,

SCRUTATOR.

*“Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?”*  
*“Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.”*

## NOTES.

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### NOTE A.—(p. 108.)

THAT infant-communion has the same claim to antiquity as infant-baptism, and had the same origin, the following few authorities, selected from many, will be sufficient to prove:—

SALMASIUS and SUICERUS, state, that, “because the eucharist was given to adult catechumens, when they were washed with holy baptism, *without any space of time intervening*, this was also done to infants, *after infant baptism was introduced*.”

ISAAC T. HINTON, in his church history, says, “Whatever childish additions the ancients made to baptism, they never separated it from the Lord’s Supper.”

BINGHAM, in his Antiquities,—“It is beyond dispute, that, as the church baptised infants, so she admitted them into a participation in the eucharist, as soon as they were baptised.”

JEROME, AUSTIN, and other fathers, testify that they who were baptised—not only adults, but also infants—*without any delay*, received the Lord’s Supper in both kinds.—*Hospiianus*.

CHILLINGWORTH says, “I am sure St. Augustine held the communicating of infants to be *as much Apostolic tradition* as the baptising of them.”

ROBERT BARCLAY,—“So far as can be learned, the use of infant-communion and of infant-baptism are of *alike age*; though the one is laid aside, both by Papists and Protestants, and the other is retained.”

VENEMA,—“In the ancient church, baptism and the Lord’s Supper, in respect of the subjects, were never separated. In the thirteenth century, baptised infants ceased to be admitted to the Lord’s Supper.” (i. e. in the western church); but,

Says Dr. WALL, "The Greek church continued the custom of infant-communion."

Well, then, might Dr. Judson ask, "why those in the west who advocate infant-baptism do not become advocates of infant-communion also." For, though for neither is there any authority in Scripture; for both *there is an equality of sanction from tradition*; and, there cannot be a doubt, that, if the Catholic Church had continued both down to the Reformation, both would have come down to us from Cranmer and his ecclesiastical associates, as portions of the authorized ritual of the established church—the one being, in that case, held to be as much based on the Jewish passover, as the other now is, though with far less analogy, on Jewish circumcision—both, in fact, as far as argument is concerned, must stand or fall together.

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NOTE B.—(p. 117.)

SUPPOSE the question were put to every minister of the Church of Scotland individually, whether he really believed, that the "washing with water," in baptism, "*seals*" the "grafting of the infant into Christ"—"*seals*" its "partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace," &c., there is not one of them, from "John O' Groat's" to the Border, who would return the simple answer, "Yes," but would reply in some such circumlocutive form as would amount to an evasion. If put into another shape, thus—"Do you believe that all the men and women in Scotland who were baptised in their infancy, were *then* 'ingrafted into Christ'—were *then* 'made partakers of the benefits of the covenant of grace'—or even had *then* these blessings 'sealed' to them as theirs, to be enjoyed by them as soon as they arrived at an age in which they should be capable of enjoying them?" Every one of them would unhesitatingly answer "No." What, then, do they mean when they profess their belief that the act of baptism "*seals* (to the baptised) their ingrafting into Christ?" Do they mean, for instance, that, in most cases, this ingrafting is a mere temporary affair?—that infants, *during their infancy*, "are ingrafted into Christ," and as soon as they begin to show that their hearts are unchanged—that they are in "the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity," the ingraftment ceases? Such an ingrafting as this, not one of them will avow. But, again, is it the mere "washing of water" that produces this ingrafting?—or has the profession of the faith of the parent any thing to do with it? The answer to another question in the Catechism supplies a negative to both forms of the question: for, it is there declared that the blessing of the sacraments is confined to those, who "by faith receive them." But, infants are incapable of

faith. Is it the faith of the parent, then, in connexion with "the washing," that produces the temporary ingrafting?—that "seals to the baptised the benefits of the covenant," during the period of infancy? If so, what *are* those benefits? evidently, during that period, they are incapable of *enjoying* any, unless they die and go to heaven. But, where do they find in Scripture the doctrine of a proxy faith, specially securing eternal life to the offspring of believers when they die in infancy?—Nowhere—but even granting it, what becomes of those whose parents have *no faith*?—what of those whose parents, having faith, do not feel it to be their duty to baptise their infants? These are only some of the many difficulties that surround the subject of infant-baptism, as set forth and expounded in the Standards of the Scottish Church. Yet, to these standards every office-bearer must signify his assent and consent before admission to office; and to these standards, containing other dogmas, also, which have long since been discarded in practice, every member is presumed to adhere.

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NOTE C.—(p. 118.)

THE Roman Catholic Church, from which all Protestant Churches received it, does not pretend to have any Scriptural authority for infant-baptism; and hence one of the most telling arguments adduced by its advocates against Protestants, when assailing the Catholic doctrine of the authority of human tradition, is, that Protestants can produce no authority but tradition in favour of infant-baptism. Bossuet, the acute and eloquent Catholic Bishop of Meaux, says, "Experience has shown, that all the attempts of the reformed to confound the Baptists by the Scripture, have been weak; and, therefore, they are at last obliged to allege to them the practice of the church"—i.e. in ages succeeding the apostolic times. So, the Oxford Divines, in a convocation held 1647, acknowledged, that, "without the consentaneous judgment of the church, they should be at a loss, when they are called upon for proof in the point of infant-baptism." But what these Oxford Divines termed "the judgment of the church—the universal church," was not the judgment of *the primitive church*, but the church after it had been greatly corrupted—just as when Lord Lyttelton speaks of *the church*, he does not mean the church universal, but the church established by Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Elizabeth. The "Apostolic Fathers," though they often speak of the baptism of adults, say nothing of the baptism of infants;—even the writers of the second century, like the inspired penmen and "Apostolic Fathers" who immedi-

preceded them, say nothing of infant-baptism. During the third century, when, as Salmasius remarks, "the opinion prevailed that no one could be saved without being baptised, *the custom across of baptising infants* ; and, in succeeding centuries, along with infant-communion, it became very general. This is what is meant by the testimony of tradition, and "the consentaneous judgment of the church"—it is the judgment of a church degenerate and sadly fallen into corruption—just as "the voice of *the church*" in the mouth of an Episcopalian, is the voice of a reforming, but only half-reformed church, with a semi-Catholic, and violent persecutor, as its ecclesiastical head, though, doubtless, the foremost ecclesiastic reformer of his age.

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NOTE D.—(p. 118.)

THE tone of reverence with which Churchmen generally use the words "*Our Church*," is fitted to convey the impression that this *Church* is some great authoritative personage whose decisions ought, not merely to be treated with the most respectful consideration, and weighed with the gravest candour, but received with the most implicit submission, as if almost, if not absolutely, infallible. Doubtless, if the standards of the Church of England, or of any other Established Church (which has no inherent power of revision from time to time) were the product of the deepest study of a conclave of men of the highest mental and spiritual attainments, in a highly enlightened age, they would be entitled to a considerable amount of deferential regard, though not even then to the submission yielded by Lord Lyttelton to the Church of England. But when, as is the fact here, the standards are found to have been drawn up and fixed by royal and parliamentary authority, in an age just emerging from Popish ignorance and superstition—an age in which, as history records, "learning was only beginning to rear its head," and struggling at every step against the prejudices and corruptions of ages—it seems the very height of folly to accept as settled all that these standards contain. Even Cranmer himself, who was at the head of the reforming ecclesiastics, had been brought up a Catholic, and was only feeling his way out of popery, to some of the worst principles of which he clung to the last. It is well-known, that the amiable and reforming King Edward VI., would have proceeded much farther in his reforming career, had he not been kept in constant check by Cranmer and other prelates. The reduction of ecclesiastical splendour to Christian simplicity, these prelates resisted; while persecution for dogmatical error or heresy, they maintained with unrelenting rigour. Hence, the very first

article in Cranmer's digest of ecclesiastical law, (which, however, was never sanctioned) "declared that the denial of the Christian religion should be punishable with death ! and the loss of goods" to the family of the delinquent ; and heretics generally were to be visited with such inflictions as the historian says, "would seem to be very nearly equivalent to putting them to death at once." In the case of Joan Boucher, of whom Bogue and Bennett remark, that her creed was perhaps as pure as Cranmer's own, he stretched his power of persecution to the utmost extremity. When the King was pressed by Cranmer to sign the warrant for burning her alive, the kind-hearted monarch exclaimed, "What ! will you send her quick to perdition ?" Cranmer still urged the most plausible reasons he could devise, for ridding the Church of heresy ; and when at length he prevailed, though the unsophisticated judgment of the King still revolted at the deed, Edward burst into tears, and protested that his tutor should answer for it before God, as he submitted only in obedience to the bishop's precepts, and contrary to his own inclination ! Joan was a holy, devoted woman, —and an active distributor of Tyndale's translation of the New Testament, which she stealthily conveyed to many ladies of the Court ; but, she differed in opinion from **THE CHURCH**, i.e. from Cranmer and other dignitaries, respecting some nice point relative to the incarnation ! and this "**THE CHURCH**" could not tolerate, but burnt the conscientious woman to ashes in Smithfield, on the 2nd May, 1550 ! Sometime previous to this, a commission was issued to Cranmer, and eight other bishops and clerics, "to proceed inquisitorially against Baptists, to search for their books, and particularly to scrutinise their correspondence. Efforts to induce them to recant were to be made ; but, if they remained obstinate [i.e., if they refused to become hypocrites!] they were to be committed with their books to the flames" ! During the same month, "three men and a woman had faggots tied to their backs at St. Paul's Cross ; and one man and a woman were burnt in Smithfield.—A number fled to Holland, of whom, at one time, sixteen men were beheaded by the sword, and fifteen women drowned ! At another time, twenty-seven persons were put to death" ! Such are a few specimens of the manner in which "**THE CHURCH**," to which Lord Lyttelton so implicitly yields up his judgment, displayed its orthodoxy *under the very men who drew up its standards*, and at the very time that those standards were sanctioned by royal authority as the guage of opinion for future ages !

